**ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1**

**Aga tells good friend Sharon to lose weight**

**■ NEWS / A24**

**RP ambassador to Mexico Justo Orros dies**

**■ BUSINESS / B1**

**WB study urges gov't to stop NFA subsidy scheme**

**■ LIFESTYLE / D1**

**Cecile Licad survives cancer scare, holds recital of life in Manila**

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## Honasan in secret talks with gov't, says coaccused

**By Marlon Ramos**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

SOMEWHERE IN SOUTHERN TAGALOG—FUGITIVE former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan has entered into back-channel talks with the national government regarding the rebellion and coup charges filed against him, a coaccused of Honasan's said yesterday.

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER

HONASAN/ A6

## We can't be like RP, says Singapore premier

SINGAPORE—PRIME Minister Lee Hsien Loong has defended his decision to sue an opposition party ahead of the May 6 general elections, saying his government has to protect its reputation, the Sunday Times has reported.

WE CAN'T/ A6

KAMI DIN WE CAN'T BE LIKE SINGAPORE!

# Senate ready to use power vs gov't execs

## 'No blanket claim of executive privilege'

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Christine O. Avendaño**

IT LOOKS LIKE THE NORBERTO GONZALES episode will soon be repeated in the Senate.

The possibility of more Cabinet members and functionaries being cited for contempt and detained followed Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's announcement that the Palace would invoke executive privilege in "rogue investigations" by "bloodthirsty senators."

Maj. Gen. Jose Honrado, Armed Forces spokesperson, also pointed to provisions against the release of information in the 1989 Code of Ethics and Conduct of Public Officials.

Bunye and Honrado issued the statements in response to announcements in the Senate that hearings on the "Hello Garci" controversy, the $503-million NorthRail project and other alleged irregularities would resume when Congress reconvenes on May 15.

The hearings had been stalled after President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 464 last September prohibiting government and military officials from attending congressional hearings without her authorization.

Last week, the Supreme Court upheld the right of Congress to conduct inquiries in aid of legislation in a decision that declared parts of EO 464 unconstitutional.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday warned that the Senate would use its contempt powers to compel officials to answer questions at the resumption of various committee hearings.

"There can be no blanket claim of executive privilege," said Pangilinan. "Malacañang, like all other government offices, must account for its acts and refusal to be held accountable for its actions under the guise of invoking executive privilege is a violation of the Constitution."

Lacson said Congress acceding to an official request for executive privilege would be "situational, not presumptive and unilateral."

"The Senate has its own rules to adhere to when such an invocation (of executive privilege) is unjustifiably used by the invited resource person or persons," Lacson said.

"The committee members acting as a collegial body, not the re-

SENATE/ A22

## GMA, Senate brace for fresh showdowns

**By Amando Doronila**

**ANALYSIS**

THE SUPREME COURT DECISION STRIKING down key portions of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464 that banned executive department officials from appearing in congressional inquiries without her permission has opened the gates to the resumption of inquiries into controversial issues, including allegations she rigged the 2004 election.

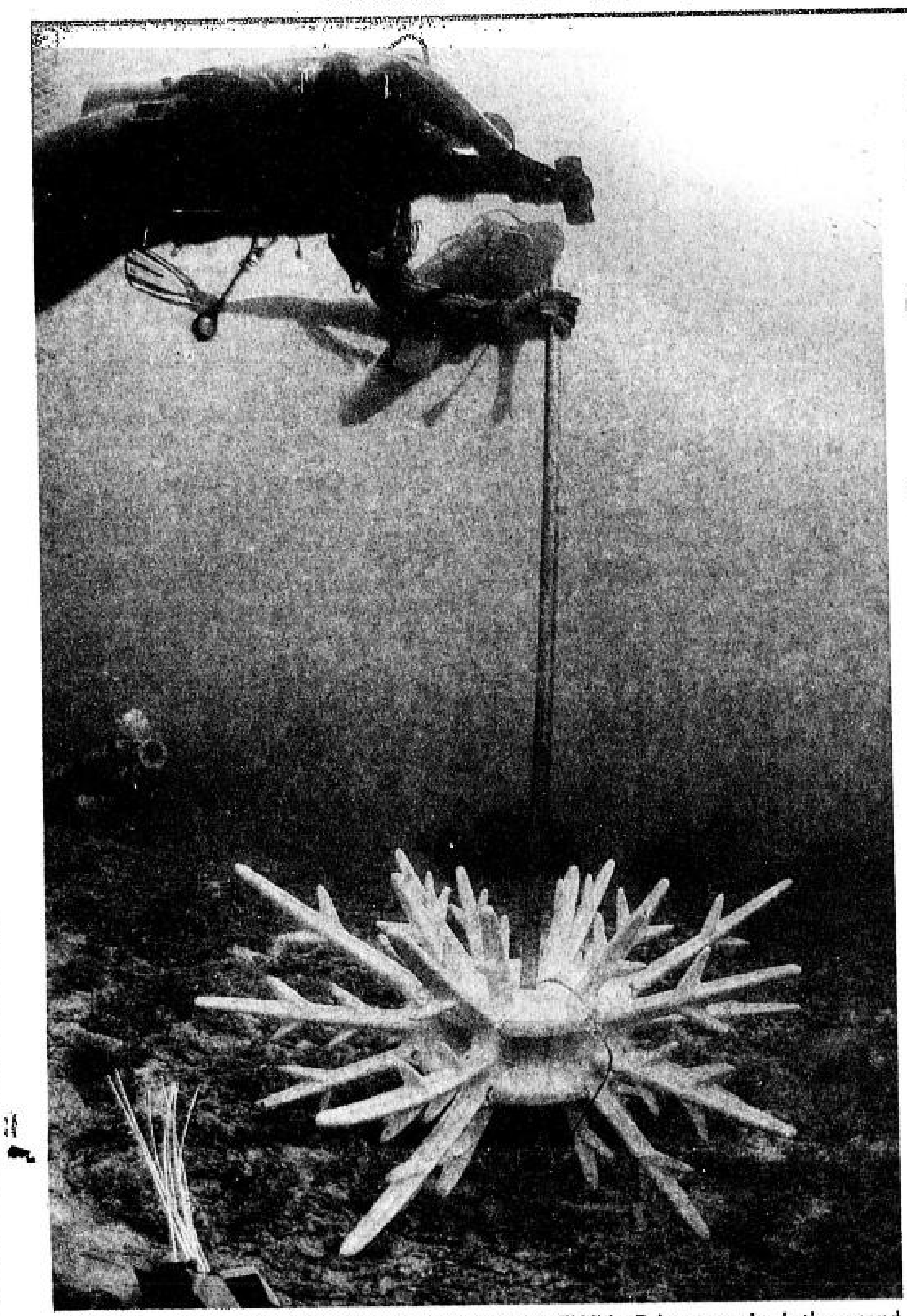
In a 14-0 decision, the high court upheld the right of Congress to compel the appearance of executive department officials in legislative inquiries but it voided only certain portions of EO 464, thereby not giving the Senate a sweeping victory in its petition that asked the court to declare EO 464 null and void for being unconstitutional.

The ruling issued on April 20 also conceded certain points to the executive department, holding that Congress could compel officials to testify in inquiries "in aid of legislation," saying that "Congress undoubtedly has a right of information from the executive branch whenever it is sought in aid of legislation."

But the court qualified this right with the ruling that "if the executive branch withholds such information on the ground that it is privileged, it must so assert it and state the reason therefor and why it must be respected."

The court made a distinction between testi-

GMA/ A22



**DIVERS** install the country's first ceramic coral reefs in El Nido, Palawan, and only the second of its kind in the world. GUTSY TUASON

## Ceramic reefs boost growth of El Nido's sea rainforests

**By Blanche S. Rivera**

REFORESTATION IS GOING ON UNDER WATER in El Nido, a world-renowned dive site and threatened fishing ground.

Environmentalists have installed ceramic coral reefs—or EcoReefs—near Tres Marias, a cluster of limestone cliffs jutting out of Bacuit Bay to boost the growth of coral reefs, dubbed the rainforests of the sea.

On April 1, the El Nido Foundation and Seacology, a US-based nonprofit organization with conservation projects in 80 islands and 40 countries, brought in 100 modules of EcoReefs as part of its reef restoration program.

The world's first artificial reef designed to rehabilitate damaged corals, EcoReefs are made of ceramic stoneware that is ideal for

CERAMIC/ A22

'NO TO DEREGULATION'

## Reimpose oil price controls, gov't urged

**By Michael Lim Ubac**

THE SURGE IN WORLD OIL prices has given fresh impetus to calls for the government to impose price controls to prevent oil firms in the country from increasing pump prices at will.

"The government can't forever plead with oil companies to implement price adjustments on a staggered basis. It's like asking them (oil firms) to kill us softly," party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said in a phone interview yesterday.

Mariano and fellow Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran are pushing for the scrapping of Republic Act No. 8479, the downstream oil deregulation law, which they claim has institutionalized the oil cartel.

Downstream oil industry refers to the business of importing, exporting, re-exporting, shipping, transporting, processing, refining, storing, distributing, marketing and selling of crude oil, gasoline, diesel, liquefied petroleum gas, kerosene and other petroleum products.

Mariano and Beltran are the principal authors of House Bill No. 1065 that seeks to nationalize the oil industry.

They also supported the plan of transport groups such as Piston to stage a series of transport strikes to force President Macapagal-Arroyo to scrap the law.

Beltran said the enactment of a P125 daily minimum wage increase would be an apt government response to ease the impact of high fuel prices on consumers.

With oil prices hitting an all-time high of $75.35 a barrel at the New York Mercantile Exchange on Friday (Saturday in Manila), the call of the party-list lawmakers for a regulated oil industry appears to be getting the support of congressional leaders.

Representatives Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City and Exequiel Javier of Antique said they favored a review of the oil deregulation law.

REIMPOSE / A23

**'FIREFLIES' ON WHEELS**

Some 3,000 bikers wearing costumes join Sunday's "Tour of the Fireflies," a 50-km ride around five cities and towns of Metro Manila to promote cycling as a sustainable means of transportation. RAFFY LERMA

## High gas prices spur US investments in biofuels

SOMETIMES, RICK O'SHEA STILL HEARS the beer bottles clanking in the shadows of the old Miller brewing plant in Fulton, New York, where he worked until the place closed more than a decade ago.

Now he is the engineering director of a project aiming to turn the ghostly, 170-hectare complex into the Northeast's first ethanol production plant, churning biofuel out of the massive vats that once brewed Miller Lite.

With gas costing $3 a gallon in many parts of the United States and much of the oil-producing world in turmoil, the lure of homegrown fuel is a powerful one.

New York Gov. George E. Pataki is intent on making the state the vanguard of ethanol production in the Northeast, and the Fulton plant is one of the projects in the region that is closest to fruition.

Certainly, there is a market. New environmental regulations are spurring a rapid rise in demand for ethanol this year as a replacement for Methyl tert-butyl ether, a gasoline additive better known as MTBE that has been linked to groundwater contamination.

But in the United States, ethanol has al-

HIGH/ A22

# Second FRONTPAGE

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### WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over Southern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/04/23/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Manila | Partly Cloudy | Iloilo/Bacolod | Cloudy with Rains |
| Baguio | Partly Cloudy | Roxas | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tuguegarao | Partly Cloudy | Cebu | Cloudy with Rains |
| Laoag | Partly Cloudy | Tacloban | Cloudy with Rains |
| Clark Zone | Partly Cloudy | Gen. Santos | Cloudy with Rains |
| Tagaytay | Partly Cloudy | Zamboanga | Cloudy with Rains |
| Legazpi | Partly Cloudy | Cagayan de Oro | Cloudy with Rains |
| Calapan | Cloudy with Rains | Davao | Cloudy with Rains |

# Leftist killings part of AFP plan, says militant leader

**By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*
**and Luige A. del Puerto,** *Manila*

LUCENA CITY—A TOP OFFICIAL OF BAYAN MUNA yesterday charged that the wave of killings of militants was in compliance with "Oplan Bantay Laya," a purported military campaign to destroy the communist New People's Army and other leftist groups within five years' time.

"This is the last year of that oplan. And in the assessment of the military, they are still way below the target that's why the AFP has shifted to fast-track mode, thus, these new waves of killings," Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna national deputy secretary general, told the INQUIRER by phone.

De Castro made the claim after a Bayan Muna member in General Nakar, Quezon, and a relative also believed to belong to the group were shot dead by unidentified men on Saturday.

The killings brought to 11 the number of militants murdered in different parts of the country since the start of the year, and to at least 100 the number killed since 2001.

Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado confirmed the AFP had an "Oplan Bantay Laya" but this dealt with the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army and had nothing to do with legal leftist organizations.

Honrado would not, however, discuss details "because these are operational plans."

## NPA threat

"Yes, we have an Oplan Bantay Laya but this deals or addresses the CPP-NPA threat. We don't include leftist organizations," he said.

"These are just accusations. Anyone can make any accusation under the sun."

Doris Cuario, secretary general of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog, identified the victims of Saturday's attack as Marilou Rubio and her brother, Virgilio.

Cuario corrected her earlier report, which gave Marilou's last name as Sanchez.

She said Marilou Rubio was listed as a Bayan Muna member. "We're still checking the affiliation of her brother. But most probably, he was also a Bayan Muna member," she said in a phone interview.

She said the attackers also beat up Rubio's common-law husband, Larry Sanchez.

"We have reports that Larry's sister-in-law was also abducted and is still missing," Cuario said.

## Dual personality?

Cuario said that Sanchez was both the village chief of police in Barangay Magsikap and a Bayan Muna district leader in northern Quezon. Magsikap is a remote barrio of General Nakar at the foot of the Sierra Madre mountains.

General Nakar police chief Dodgie Benaid confirmed the killings but said the police did not receive any report of an abduction related to the incident.

"Even the chieftain of Barangay Magsikap was not aware of the supposed abduction," he said.

## Suspected killers

He said that based on a police investigation, a group of heavily armed men barged into the minirest house of Rubio's at around 2 a.m., tied her to a house post and shot her once in the head.

Her brother was found dead in a nearby hut also with a single shot in the head. His hands were tied behind his back.

Benaid said Sanchez had gone into hiding and had yet to talk to the police.

Cuario claimed members of the Army's 16th Infantry Battalion were the "most likely suspects."

Army Maj. Jose Broso, spokesperson of the Southern Luzon Command, said the command had no report on the incident.

"Coming from the left, it's probably another black smear campaign against the military," he said of Cuario's claim.

## Present proof

Honrado challenged the militants to support their allegation.

"If they have evidence, they should file a case in court, and we will help them prosecute it," Honrado said.

"(They should specify) who among (the military) did it," he said, adding that a general accusation without proof was unfair to the whole military organization.

De Castro said Rubio was the 85th Bayan Muna member killed by suspected military hit men since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001.

She was the seventh Bayan Muna member killed this year, De Castro said.

# 'Documents prove military monitoring'

MILITANTS YESTERDAY SAID they had documents proving that the monitoring of above-ground militant organizations had been aggressively adopted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a policy during the last few years.

The documents showed the prevailing view in the military that left-leaning but legal organizations were allies and fronts of the communist insurgency movement, the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said.

The KMP, a vocal critic of the Arroyo administration, claimed its sources in the military provided them with the documents.

It said one of the documents stated that the "paucity of information" about groups allegedly aligned with the insurgency "has more or less skewed analyses and distorted perspective with regard to their role in actively advancing the revolutionary struggle of the Left."

KMP information officer Carl Ala said a recent crackdown on activists, including the filing of rebellion charges against some lawmakers "confirm the veracity of these documents."

## Not ours, says AFP

A military spokesperson dismissed the leftist group's claims and challenged it to produce the documents so their authenticity could be established.

"Many such memorandums have cropped up before, and I tell you they are not from us," said Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado, chief of the AFP-Civil Security Group.

"It is not government policy (to) direct the AFP or the PNP to harass (or) intimidate legal organizations. It is not government policy to repress them," he said.

## Lack of information

One of the two documents was titled "Target Research on Sectoral Organizations" and dated September 2004, the KMP said.

"This Headquarters has taken due notice of the paucity of information regarding sectoral groups that have been long aligned with or purported to be front organizations of the Communist Terrorist Movement (CTM)," said the supposed memorandum, a copy of which was provided to the INQUIRER.

This "has, more or less, skewed analyses and distorted perspective with regard to their role in actively advancing the revolutionary struggle of the Left," it said.

## Extreme caution

It added: "In view of the foregoing, you are hereby directed to adopt a distinct system of target research, focusing mainly on all sectoral organizations in your respective AOR (area of responsibilities) that are known to be actual fronts of the CTM and other groups with similar inclinations," the supposed military document said.

But the same memo said "extreme caution" should be observed in doing the research since "the objects and subjects of this undertaking are mostly legal organizations duly recognized not only by the local community or public at large, but also by the National Government itself."

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# Ruling on EO hasn't strained ties with GMA, says Chief Justice

CANDABA, PAMPANGA—CHIEF Justice Artemio Panganiban said the Supreme Court's decision on Executive Order No. 464 had not strained his relationship with President Macapagal-Arroyo, who appointed him to the post in December.

"*Ali naman uling* (It hasn't because) we are the judiciary. We don't speak of politics," Panganiban told the INQUIRER here yesterday.

The Chief Justice also did not express any regret over last Thursday's ruling that upheld the right of Congress to compel officials of the executive branch to testify in its inquiries in aid of legislation.

PANGANIBAN

## Decisions based on facts

"We make decisions based on the facts and issues in every case and we do not particularly care nor mind who wins or loses. That's not the question that we answer. The question we answer is what is right," he said.

In Isabela, Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, said police officials were duty-bound to attend congressional inquiries following the high court's decision on EO 464.

## No friendship

Asked about the possible political backlash of the court's decision on Ms Arroyo, Panganiban said: "We are not deciding this on the basis of friendship, neither on the basis of relationships. We are deciding this on the basis of law."

"We are independent in the sense that we decide cases on the basis of what is the issue, not on who is involved," he added.

## Honored son

Yesterday, the Candaba government gave Panganiban, a native of the town, a tribute.

He left this farming town, the refuge of his family during the Japanese occupation, when he was barely 10 years old and mired in poverty.

Yesterday, the 69-year-old Chief Justice was welcomed by townmates with affection.

His homecoming came with a single message: Poor kids can make it in life if they have a strong faith in God and if they strive hard.

During a program, Panganiban was conferred the Most Outstanding Candabeño Award by the town council.

## Grew up in poverty

"I am elated that my townmates have received me. I'm very happy that the town recognizes me. You see, I feel oneness with them because I grew up in poverty and difficulties," he said.

In Manila where the entire family went to rebuild their lives after World War II, the young Panganiban shined shoes, sold newspapers, took odd jobs and taught in school to get himself an education.

"I believe that's a good example that people in Candaba and Pampanga can rise above their poverty and difficulties," he said. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

# Cops propose car-tracking plan's revival

THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT GROUP (TMG) has proposed the revival of an inter-island clearance system that was suspended two years ago to curb the movement of stolen or carjacked vehicles from Metro Manila to the provinces and vice versa.

The TMG, a police unit that goes after carjacking syndicates, also proposed that the Philippines adopt an easier way of verifying the identity of vehicles and determining whether they were stolen or not.

"If you remember two years ago the transshipment clearance was lifted because of certain policy directions. We found that when it was lifted, the car (thieves) found an easy way to bring vehicles from Metro Manila to the Visayas and Mindanao," said TMG director Chief Supt. Errol Pan.

Suspected stolen cars were also easily brought from other urban centers in the archipelago to the capital, he said.

Under the proposed system, however, Pan said only private cars would be required to get a transshipment clearance from the TMG. Buses and trucks would be exempted from the scheme.

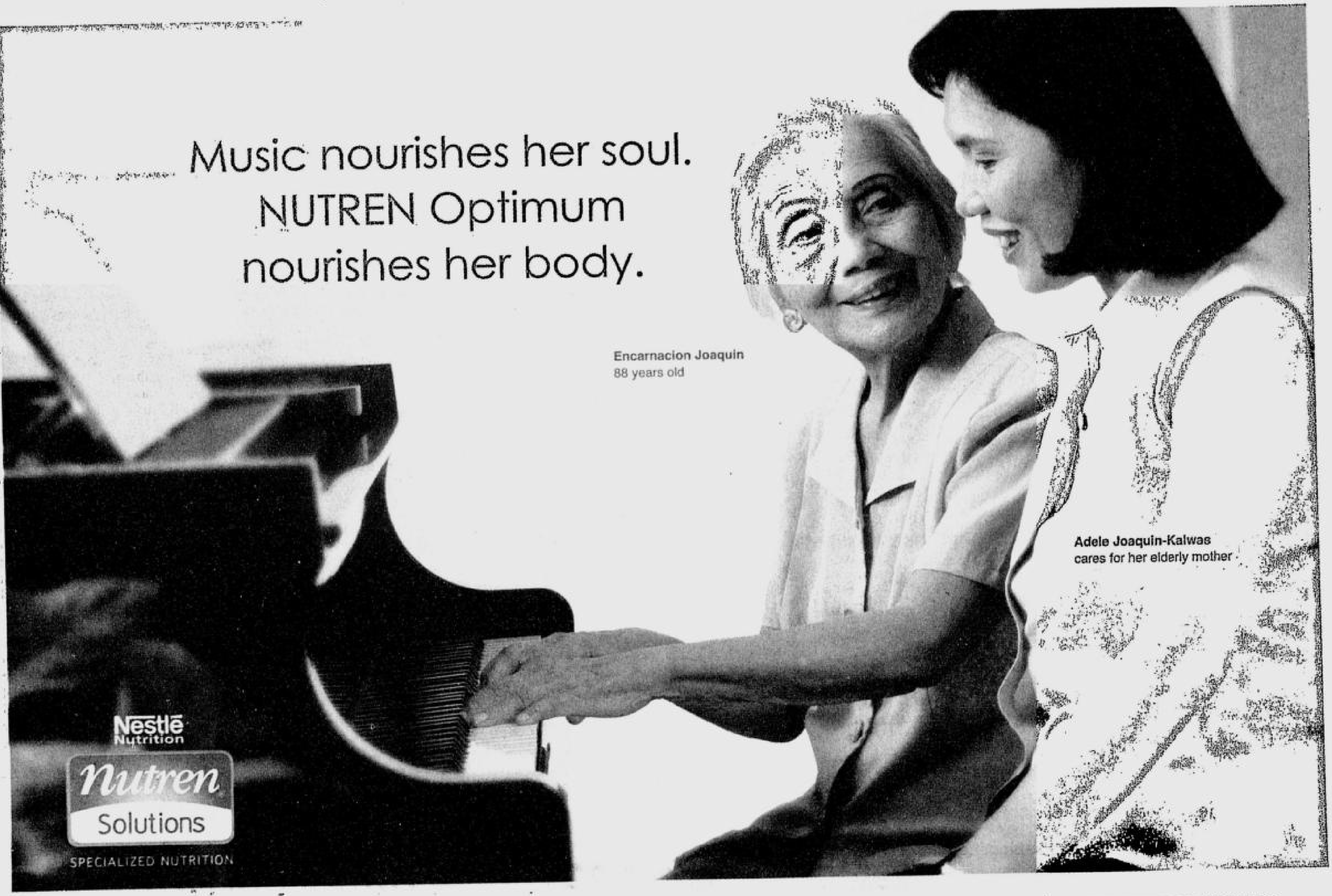
The TMG will also push for the adoption of the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) system to ascertain the identity of a car.

The VIN, embossed on lead, is found near the dashboard and windshield of newer types of vehicles.

Pan explained that this was easily accessible, and even easier to determine if it had been tampered with, compared to the chassis and engine numbers, which are located in areas of a vehicle that are difficult to reach. (The chassis number is located under the car and the engine number, under the hood.)

In the Philippines, the motor and chassis numbers, along with the plate number and the physical attributes, are used to identify a car.

But under this system, potential car buyers cannot determine whether these numbers had been tampered with or not, according to Pan. *Luige A. del Puerto*



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[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food & Sci & Nutr. 42:353, 2002. [2] Meister A. Cancer Res 1994;54(S):1969-1975.

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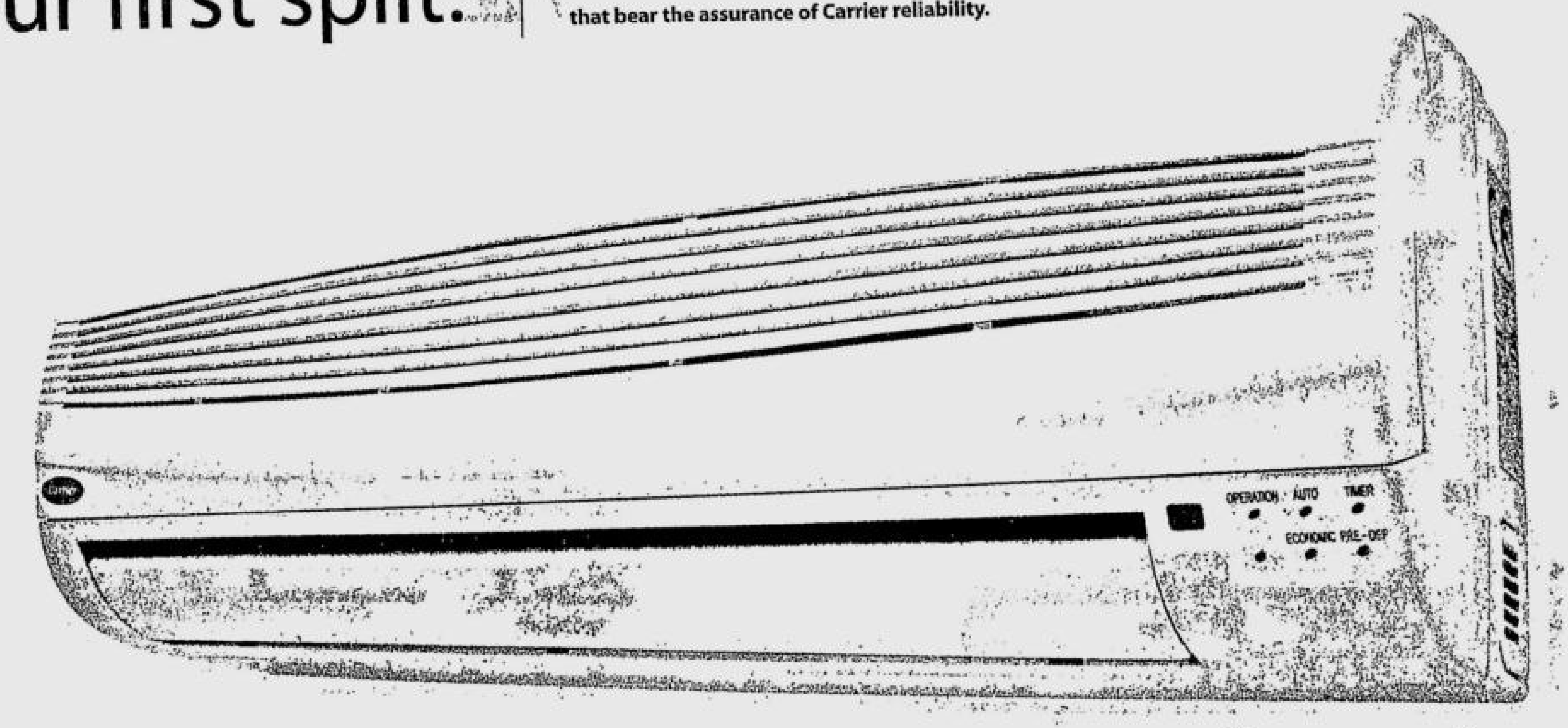

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# Archbishop wants STL out of Pampanga

CANDABA—ARCHBISHOP PACIANO ANICETO does not want the Small Town Lottery (STL) to operate in Pampanga and has instructed the archdiocese's Social Action Center of Pampanga (Sacop) to seek the cancellation of the license obtained by a private company to operate STL in the province.

Aniceto, chair of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on Family and Life, said that while the state-sanctioned lottery was legal, "we do not approve of such arrangements."

According to him, STL would not offer decent jobs to thousands of displaced "jueteng" collectors and would also instill the wrong value of reliance on chance rather than on hard work.

"A life that is full, that promotes authentic human development should be the vision of the government. I hope this is the orientation and direction of our government so that the quality of life of the people would be improved," Aniceto told the INQUIRER here on Sunday.

"Our stand is that there should be other sources of good jobs. Although [STL] is legal, not all that is legal is moral," he said.

He said he was confident that bettors and jueteng collectors in Pampanga could cope without the illegal numbers game. History, he said, had proven that Kapampangans have the good traits and grit to make it in life.

He said Sacop, as the Church's social justice arm, would "look for possible alternatives on how to face this challenge in our archdiocese."

Sun Cove Corp. obtained a license from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office to run the STL in Pampanga's 21 towns and in the capital, the City of San Fernando.

The firm, however, has not started operations to the consternation of the displaced jueteng collectors.

Police estimate that the number of displaced jueteng collectors throughout Pampanga could reach 25,000.

The provincial board has not passed a resolution approving the operations of STL in Pampanga.

Aniceto, whom President Macapagal-Arroyo publicly acknowledged was one of her spiritual advisers, also disagreed with the government's view that STL was an antidote to jueteng, an illegal numbers game that the government and the Catholic Church have failed to stop for decades.

*Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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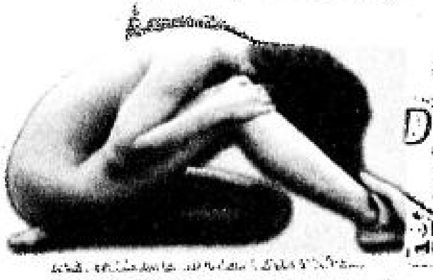

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# Honasan in secret talks with gov't, says coaccused

From page A1

somewhere in Southern Tagalog, retired Col. Ernesto Macahiya said Honasan told him in a recent phone talk that he had agreed to enter into "negotiations" with some administration representatives.

Macahiya said he was not sure who initiated the talks and what the subject was.

"There are some initiatives (for negotiations). We do not know if these came from Greg, (the President's chief of staff) Mike Defensor or (Justice) Secretary Raul Gonzalez. But I understand there are backdoor negotiations," Macahiya said.

"Mediations are being discussed now. Depending on the terms of these mediations, the senator will act accordingly," he added.

## Defensor says no talks

Reached by the INQUIRER, Defensor denied there were back-channel contacts with Honasan.

"There is no back-channelling with Gringo. If there is going to be any back-channelling to be done, it's going to be handled by me or Bert Gonzales," Defensor said, referring to the national security adviser.

Defensor said President Macapagal-Arroyo's political, security and military advisers were "clear" on the issue of Honasan and other military adventurists.

"We have drawn the line and we will not back-channel," he said. "If he is innocent, he has to face the charges. If he is guilty, he has to be punished."

## A hardline stance

Defensor added: "We're taking a hardline stand because we don't want to encourage military adventurism ... We're not afraid of military adventurism in the future."

He said it was difficult to be involved in back-channel negotiations "because everything is on the legal table, there is a process to be followed."

Macahiya ruled out a surrender by Honasan as part of the negotiations.

He also said members of his group would never allow themselves to be arrested.

## He won't succumb

"Knowing Honasan, he will not succumb [to pressure]. He is a principled man. He's conscious of his actions," Macahiya said.

Like the former senator, Macahiya has been in hiding from the time a warrant for his arrest was issued by a Makati Regional Trial Court in February on rebellion charges stemming from the Oakwood mutiny almost three years ago.

The officer has been moving from place to place to avoid arrest. He has also filed a leave of absence as spokesperson of the Honasan-led Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI).

## Birthday wishes

But Macahiya said he was in constant communication with Honasan through mobile phone.

He even showed the INQUIRER a text message with a wish for him on his 64th birthday on Saturday purportedly sent by Honasan.

"He regularly checks on our situation. All of us are in constant communication with each other. We synchronize all our legal moves," Macahiya said.

Four other people, including PGBI secretary general George Duldulao, have also been ordered arrested by the court.

Macahiya stressed that Honasan had not left the country.

## Who is the broker?

When asked who could be helping Honasan in the supposed back-channel talks, Macahiya said it was a distant uncle of Honasan who was still in active government service.

Asked if Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile could be involved in the negotiations, Macahiya said: "He's a good bet. (Honasan) respects the good senator."

Macahiya lambasted the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Philippine National Police for offering bounties for their arrest.

He said the DILG and the PNP were acting like judges and executioners in the cases against them.

## Where is justice?

The DILG has approved a P5-million reward for Honasan's arrest. A P500,000 reward has also been announced for any information on Macahiya's whereabouts.

"Issuing a bounty on our heads is no different from saying that we are guilty. Our judicial system says anybody is presumed innocent unless proven otherwise," he said.

Macahiya also said: "The court has not arraigned us. There was no preliminary investigation. Where is justice there?"

He also slammed the PNP plan to include their pictures in a rogues' gallery of wanted persons.

"We are not hardened criminals. That is a clear injustice," he lamented.

The government has allotted a total of P8 million for the arrest of Honasan's group.

"Is the money included in the budget of the DILG? Is the money really intended as a reward? Is the DILG allowed to use the people's money as a reward?" he asked. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

# *Guardians seek fair trial*

CALAMBA CITY—SOME 2,000 MEMBERS of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. yesterday called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to give former Sen. Gregorio Honasan and other PGBI leaders a fair trial on rebellion and coup charges.

They passed a resolution to that effect during their annual convention and election of officers held in Calamba City attended by members from Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Quezon.

Honasan is the group's acknowledged grand supremo and founder.

"(W)e respectfully appeal to (the President) to avail our grand supremo and our two brothers (retired Col. Eduardo Macahiya and PGBI secretary general George Duldulao) the right to due process and extend them the benefit of an impartial justice," the group said in a manifesto.

Aries Valenzuela, chair of the PGBI in Region 4A, said their group never advocated illegal methods in effecting changes in the government.

"Our grand supremo told us to continue with our livelihood programs for our brothers and stay committed to constitutional processes. We will not be swayed by the baseless accusations against our leaders," Valenzuela said. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luozn Bureau*

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# We can't be like RP ...

From page A1

"If you don't have the law of defamation, you would be like America where people say terrible things about the president and it can't be proved," Lee, 54, was quoted as saying at the sidelines of a community event.

"Or it will be like the Philippines where people say terrible things about the president. She can't sue," he said.

Lawyers for the prime minister and his father, Lee Kuan Yew, who currently holds the title of minister mentor in his son's Cabinet, said their clients were defamed in articles published in a recent newsletter of the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP).

The articles implied Lee was corrupt and was perpetuating a corrupt political system set up by his father, Singapore's independence leader and former prime minister, to benefit the political elite, the lawyers said.

Lee and his father had told SDP secretary general Chee Soon Juan and 11 other party members to apologize and pay damages by Tuesday for linking them to corruption or face legal action.

The apology must also be published in two newspapers by Thursday.

"If we do not act and the lies and defamation are repeated throughout and in election rallies and spread around, I think the government's reputation goes down," Lee said.

Chee, who has been embroiled in several legal skirmishes with the ruling People's Action Party, does not plan to apologize and will "contest the case vehemently," his lawyer M. Ravi told Agence France-Presse on Sunday.

The 43-year-old opposition leader is not eligible to run for the May 6 polls because he was declared bankrupt in February for failing to pay S$500,000 (US$314,000) in libel damages to the elder Lee and former Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong for remarks that Chee had made in the 2001 elections.

Bankrupt persons cannot run for public office under Singapore laws.

The elder Lee and other leaders of the PAP, which has ruled Singapore since independence in 1965, have a history of suing their political opponents and media critics. They argue they do so to protect their reputations. *AFP*

## Correction

IN THE APRIL 13 issue, a front-page story—"Judas phallic rites symbol of protest"—misstated that the author, Prof. Rosario C. Lucero, had a Ph.D. in English. The website of the University of the Philippines Institute of Creative Writing says that Lucero holds a Ph.D. in Philippine Studies from UP and is a professor at the Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature at the same university. She has published two anthologies of Hiligaynon literature and authored two short story collections—"Feast and Famine" and "Herstory."

* * *

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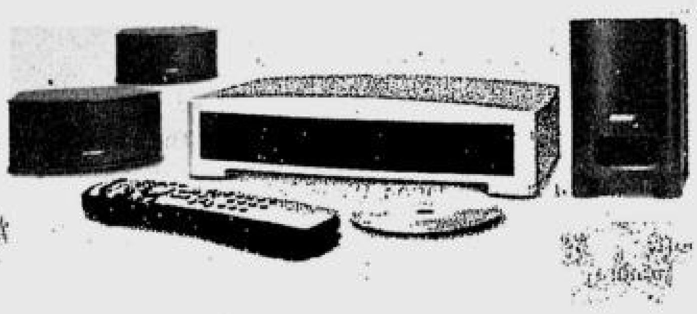

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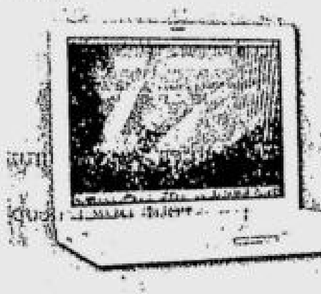

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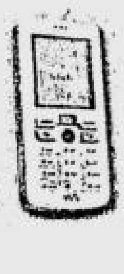

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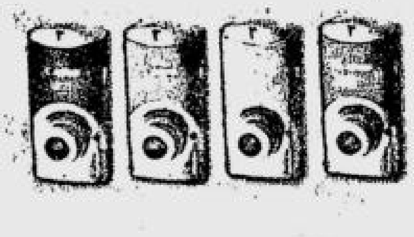

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# Subic rape victim's lawyer vows to fight raps downgrade

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE PRIVATE LAWYER OF THE woman who accused four US Marines of rape vowed to oppose the expected downgrading of the criminal charges against three of the accused.

Evalyn Ursua said on Friday she would file an opposition to the government prosecution panel's planned modification of the criminal information against the American servicemen.

The amendment would adopt a Department of Justice (DOJ) resolution dropping the charge of rape against three of the Marines, naming them as accessories instead of principals.

"We will file an opposition to the motion amending the information, downgrading the charges [against the three] to accessory... We will definitely oppose it because we believe it is legally and factually incorrect," Ursua told reporters after a hearing on Friday.

"We have to recognize that it's the city prosecutor who has control and supervision over the prosecution of this crime. However, the private complainant, also has her rights in the case... to oppose the motion. There are instances when the private complainant has to stand on her own to defend her rights, and we cannot compromise that because the [public prosecutors] have taken a particular position," she said.

The newly assembled prosecution panel, however, said it would welcome the opposition.

"That's [to be] expected because if they believe that the resolution is not to their satisfaction, they could oppose [it]. There are instances that the complainant has an independent right... There are certain aspects of the case that they can take action [on] independently," said Makati City Prosecutor Feliciano Aspi, named chief of the prosecution panel.

Judge Benjamin Pozon of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139 had set the arraignment of the four accused—Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, S/Sgt. Chad Carpentier and Marine Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis—for Friday afternoon.

The four, who have remained in the custody of US authorities by virtue of the Visiting Forces Agreement, were charged upon the complaint filed by a 22-year-old Filipino woman, who alleged that the servicemen raped her on Nov. 1 last year in a cruising van at the Subic Bay Freeport.

The court, however, has yet to take cognizance of the DOJ's resolution naming only Smith as the principal accused, for which he may face life imprisonment if convicted. Hence, the court still has at hand the original case, where all four are principals.

# Not guilty, says general to perjury charge

FORMER ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines chief of staff Gen. Lisandro Abadia (ret.) has entered a not guilty plea to the perjury charge filed against him by the Office of the Special Prosecutor before the Sandiganbayan First Division.

Abadia was arraigned on Tuesday after the antigraft court denied his motion to defer his arraignment.

Abadia's lawyer tried to prevent his arraignment by questioning the authenticity of the prosecution's copy of the retired general's 1993 Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net worth (SALN).

The antigraft court, however, agreed with prosecutor Ma. Janina Hidalgo who argued that the grounds invoked by Abadia for deferment was immaterial and ordered his arraignment.

Hidalgo said the case involved Abadia's 1992 SALN and not his 1993 SALN.

Records showed that Abadia, on April 29, 1993, attested that his income for 1992 included proceeds from the sale of real property amounting to P2.55 million.

Government prosecutors said no proof was presented to show he had earned the money from the sale.

Abadia was then charged with perjury, or violation of Article 183 of the Revised Penal Code.

Aside from the charge, Abadia is facing a P11.2-million forfeiture case in the Sandiganbayan.

Bail of P6,000 was recommended by prosecutors for his temporary release.

*Nelson F. Flores*

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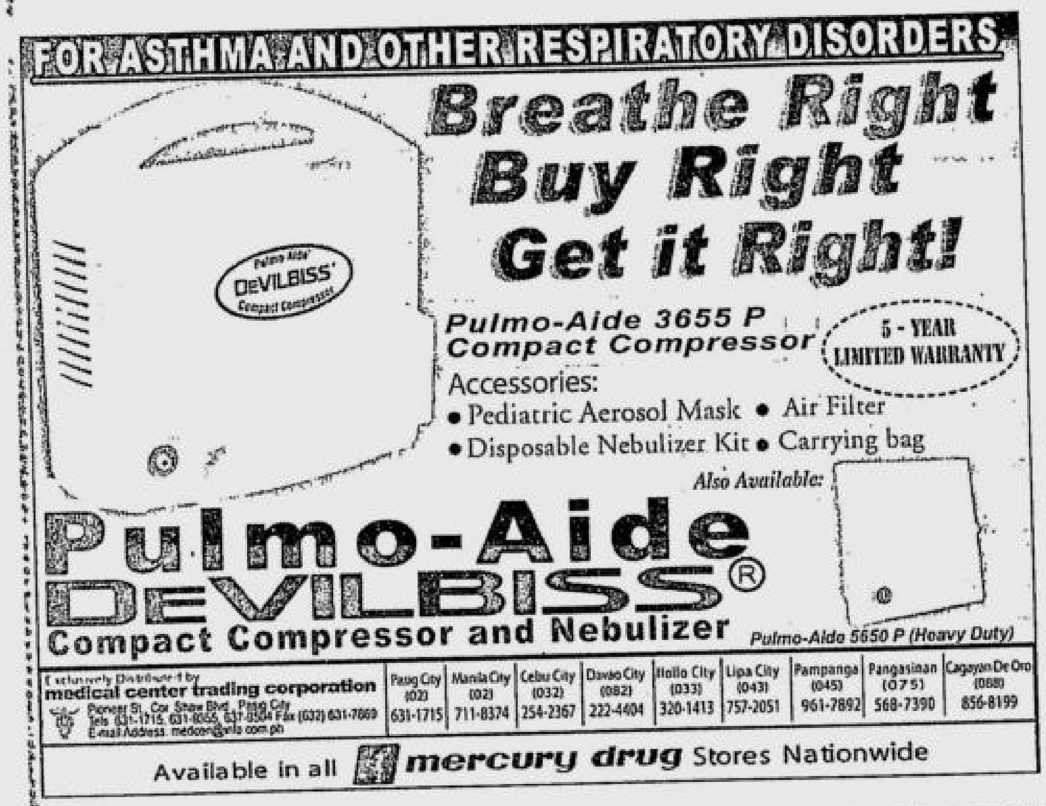
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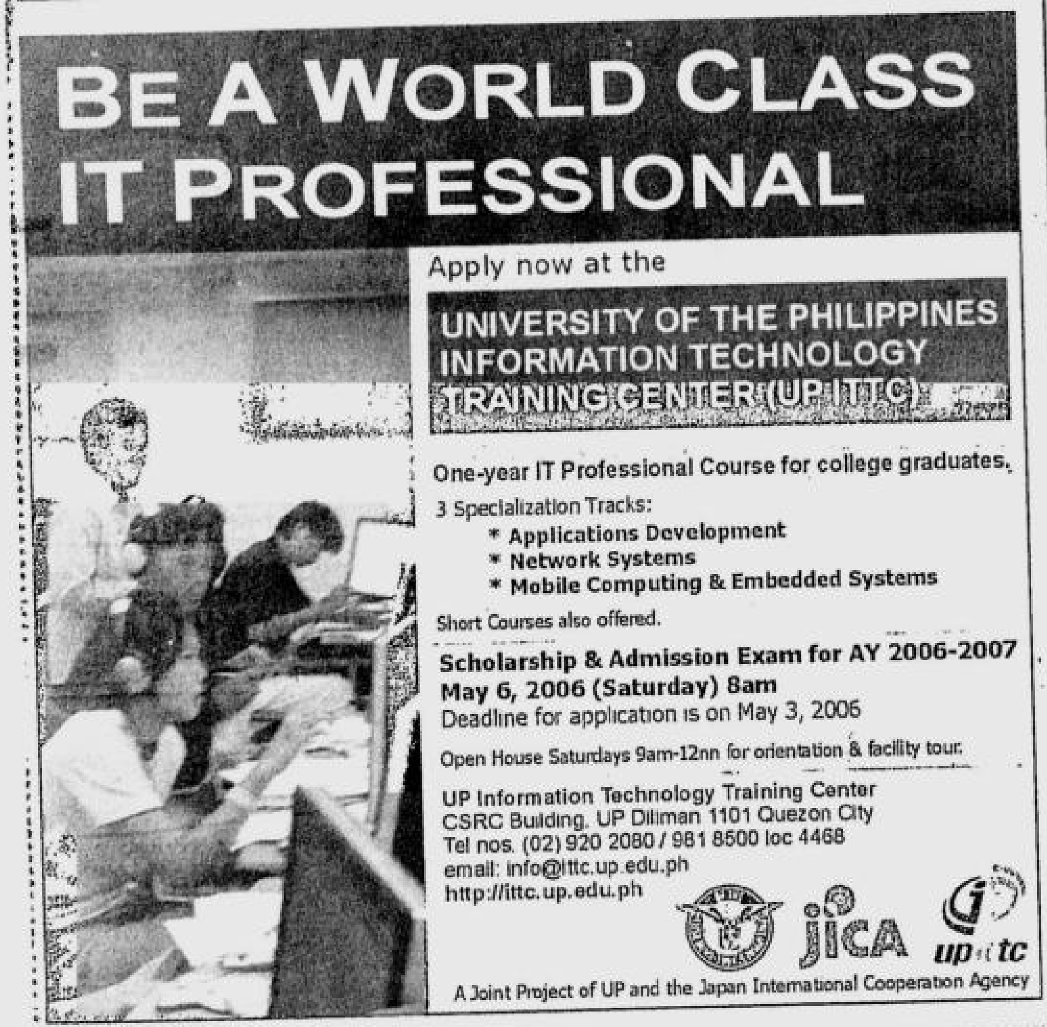
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March 31, 2006

For All Stockholders,

Please be advised that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of UnionBank of the Philippines will be at the Quezon B&C Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La, Ayala Avenue corner Makati Avenue, Makati City on Friday, May 26, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.

The Agenda for the said meeting will be as follows:

I. Calling the Roll
II. Proof of Notice of Meeting
III. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on May 27, 2005
IV. Chairman/CEO's Report to Stockholders – Mr. Justo A. Ortiz
V. Annual Report of Management on Operations for 2005 - President Victor B. Valdepeñas
VI. Appointment of External Auditor
VII. Amendment of UnionBank's Articles of Incorporation (Article 3, Page 2 thereof) to change the principal office of the Corporation from Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines to Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines
VIII. Amendment of UnionBank's By-Laws (Article 1–Head Office) to change the head office of the Bank from Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines to Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines
IX. Election of Directors for 2006 – 2007 term
X. Adjournment

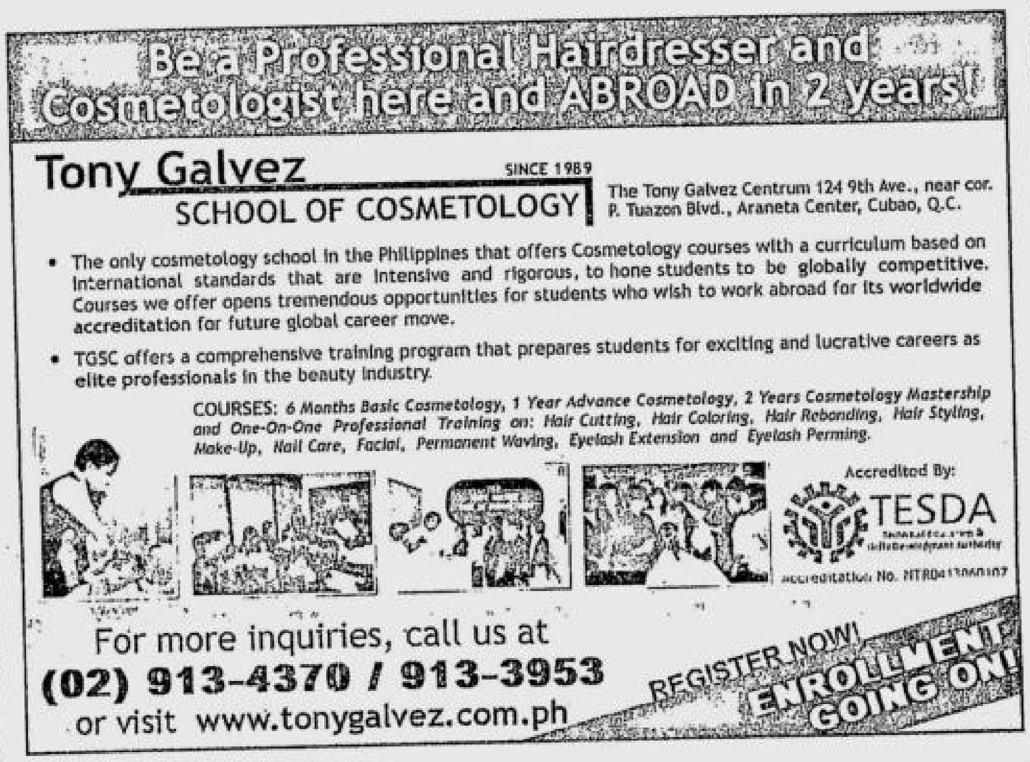
Only stockholders of record as of **April 18, 2006** will be entitled to attend and participate at the above meeting.

Likewise, I am pleased to inform you that on January 27, 2006, your Board of Directors has declared cash dividends of PESOS: ONE AND SIXTY CENTAVOS (P1.60) per share or a total equivalent of P881,993,542.40. On March 17, 2006, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas ("BSP") approved said cash dividend declaration. Thus, your Board of Directors approved the Record Date for Stockholders entitled to the cash dividends on April 3, 2006 while Payment Date is on April 28, 2006.

For your information. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ATTY. FE B. MACALINO
*Corporate Secretary*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# Luz quits DepEd

BACOLOD CITY—JUAN MIGUEL "MIKE" LUZ has resigned as education undersecretary for finance effective April 21.

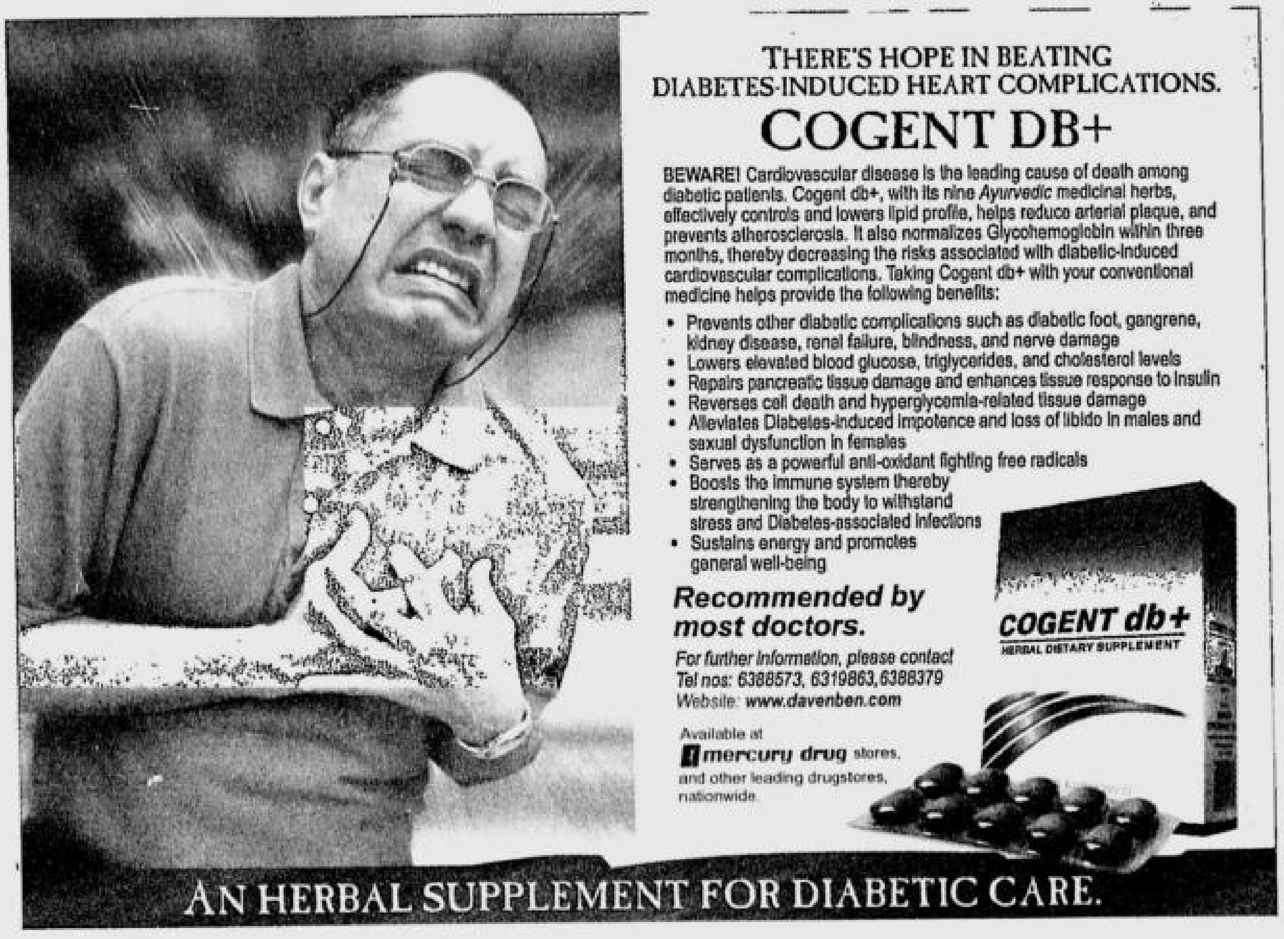
Luz said he was resigning to take on the presidency of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, an international non-governmental organization.

"Over the past four years, the Department of Education has been transformed into one of the cleanest government agencies. Let us work to maintain quality education in our schools and speak out against corruption," he said.

Luz's tenure at DepEd was marked by controversy after he refused to honor three government checks to fund the scholarship program of a pro-administration congressman in 2005. He had said honoring the checks would have been against the law.

Prior to his DepEd job, Luz was associate professor at the Asian Institute of Management and headed AIM's Center for Corporate Responsibility. He also served as associate director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, the largest developmental NGO in the country.

*Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*



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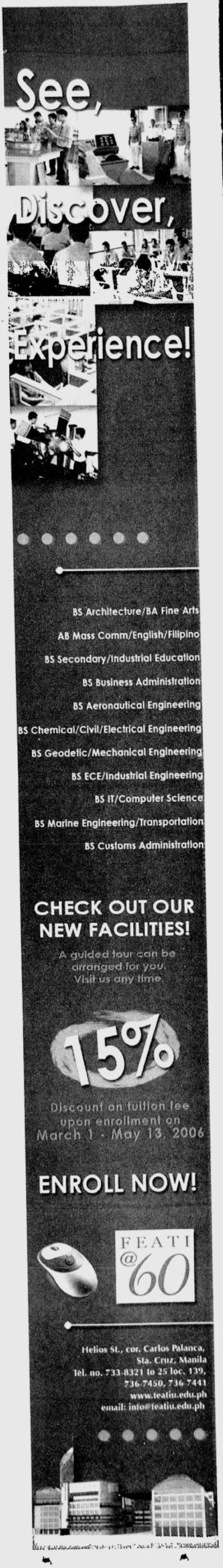

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# Chavit broke gag rule, says Erap lawyer

By Nelson Flores

FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada's lawyer Jose Flaminiano said Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson violated the sub judice rule by commenting on the testimony of the detained President.

Flaminiano's statement was in reaction to Singson's claims that Estrada contradicted himself on Wednesday when he testified that the Ilocos Sur governor gave a P1.2-million check to his son by actress Laarni Enriquez.

The sub judice rule prohibits both defense and prosecution lawyers and witnesses, including reporters, from making comments on a court case.

In a press statement, Singson pointed out that Estrada had earlier claimed, through his court-appointed lawyer, the late Prospero Crescini, that the check was payment for money owed Enriquez, who is a known jeweler.

Singson further said that Crescini had told the court that he (Singson) had purchased a diamond ring from Enriquez, Estrada's mistress, for Rachel Tiongson, who is now his wife.

"What Governor Singson said is not true. He is violating the sub judice rule by making comments on the case," Flaminiano, a former Manila City chief prosecutor, said.

He said Estrada could not have contradicted himself in open court because the former President has not previously taken the stand except last month when he testified in the Sandiganbayan on his plunder case.

Flaminiano said that Estrada has not made any statements on the matter even during the early stages of his plunder trial and thus could not have contradicted himself.

Flaminiano explained that Crescini's remarks were made during the cross-examination of a prosecution witness.

"In a cross-examination, cross-examiners could make suggestion or leading questions that what the witness testified may not be exactly true by suggesting some facts that may force him to contradict himself," Flaminiano said.

"That statement was meant to test Singson's credibility," Flaminiano added.

Meanwhile, Estrada lawyer Rufus Rodriguez stressed that Estrada's testimony even strengthened his defense because it underscored his earlier description of Singson as being untrustworthy.

"It was Governor Singson's testimony that was shattered when he claimed that he gave the amount on Dec. 22 as his contribution to the birthday gift of jewelry for Ms Laarni Enriquez, when her birthday falls on the 22nd of September," Rodriguez said.

# Chavez bucks Marcos deal

FORMER SOLICITOR General Frank Chavez vowed yesterday to oppose any move by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) to forge a settlement with the Marcoses.

"It is an abandonment of its mandate, a dereliction of its duty and a betrayal of the Filipino people," he said.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Chavez said there was a "jurisprudential bar" on any deal between the Marcoses and the government. Aside from that, a settlement will throw out all the hard work that past PCGG officials had exerted to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses.

"The PCGG has no moral ascendancy to pardon the Marcoses since it is part of this administration that has been tainted by graft and corruption. It should be reminded that it is throwing out 20 years of hard work. *Pinaghirapan namin yan* (We worked hard for it)," Chavez said.

If the PCGG manages to perfect a deal with the Marcoses and submits it to the courts for approval, Chavez said he would file contempt of court charges against the PCGG for ignoring the Supreme Court's 1998 decision.

"There are things money cannot buy. We must consider our values here. It is giving premium for corruption in government. In the future, any official who commits graft can just invoke the Marcos formula. That's a shame. We have lost our right to be ashamed of ourselves." *Alcuin Papa*

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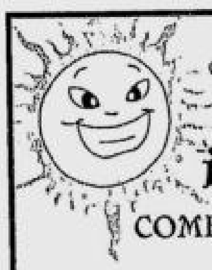

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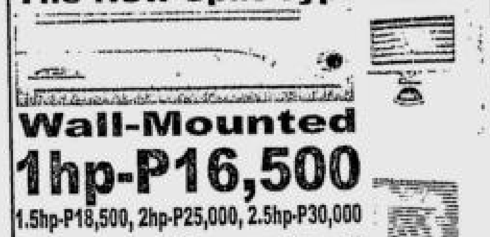

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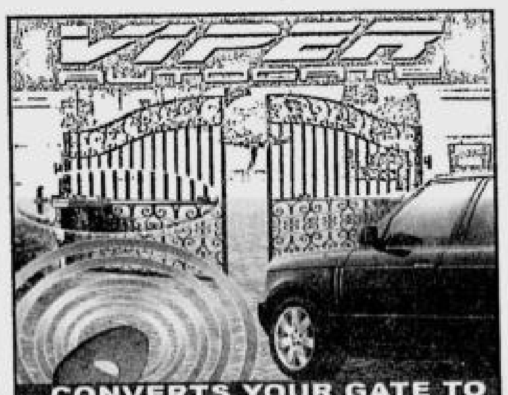

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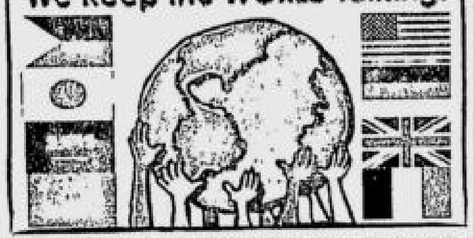

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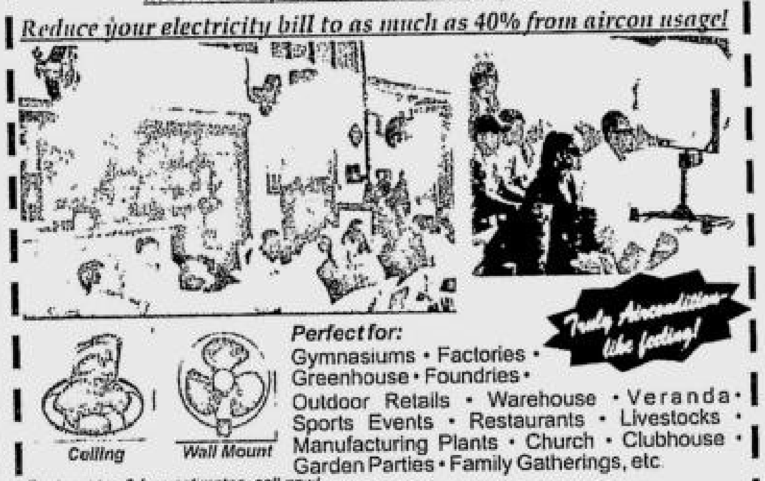

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

### Procurement of IT Equipments and other PPE items

1 The Commission on Audit, Region X intends to apply the sum of Four Million Six Hundred Seventy-Seven Thousand Pesos (Php4,677,000.00) broken down as follows.

| BRIEF DESCRIPTION | Sub-ABC |
|---|---|
| 67 units COMPUTERS, Branded<br>CPU compatible with 32 bit-64bit simultaneously, 1.8 GHz<br>Capable to run on multiple OS platforms (Windows, Linux, etc.), 1MB cache level 2<br>On-board graphics controller card 8.0 MB or higher (Video not shared on RAM)<br>512 MB Memory, dual memory channel, 1 hypertransport link (8Gbps)<br>With built-in 2 firewire ports IEEE 1394, With built-in 6 USB 2.0 ports<br>1 PCI-express x 16 slot (reserve for graphics accelerator), 2 PCI-express x 1 slot<br>4 Conventional PCI slots (32-bit, 33 Mhz) 400W power supply, AVR 500W<br>80 GB Serial ATA, 7200 rpm, DVD ROM optical drive, 15" color monitor<br>Keyboard & mouse with pad, 3 yrs warranty | Php 3,819,000.00 |
| 1 unit COMPUTER, Branded (with the same specifications above except for RAM - 1 GB Memory) | 65,000.00 |
| 30 units UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY, 400W power output or higher | 201,000.00 |
| 20 units COMPUTER TABLE, Steel Frame, SIGMA | 60,000.00 |
| 14 units PRINTERS, Hp Laser Jet, up to 19ppm; resolution up to 1200 x 1200 dpi, Memory 8 MB | 280,000.00 |
| 3 units LAPTOP COMPUTERS, Branded, 1.7 GHz/533 MHz FSB<br>512 MB PC2-4200 DDR2 RAM, 2 MB L2 cache, 60GB 5400 rpm HDD<br>Intel 945 GM Chipset, CD-RW/DVD-ROM Combo Drive, 1.44 MB FD<br>10/1000 Mbps NIC, Intel 802.11 b/g wireless (MPCI), 2 USB, 1 parallel, external display, RJ-45 (ethernet) and RJ-11 (modem) ports<br>Keyboard and Mouse, OEM, Windows XP Professional | 252,000.00 |
| | Php 4,677,000.00 |

being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of IT Equipments and other PPE items. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

2 Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting April 27 to May 5, 2006 upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos (Php500.00) from the BAC Secretariat c/o RCD Hesselinda A. Valencia, ☎ (088)858-7422, COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City.

3 The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 10, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at COA Conference Room, COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City.

4 Deadline for submission of Bids shall be on May 24, 2006, at 2:00 p.m., at COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City. Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the above address.

6. The Commission on Audit reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

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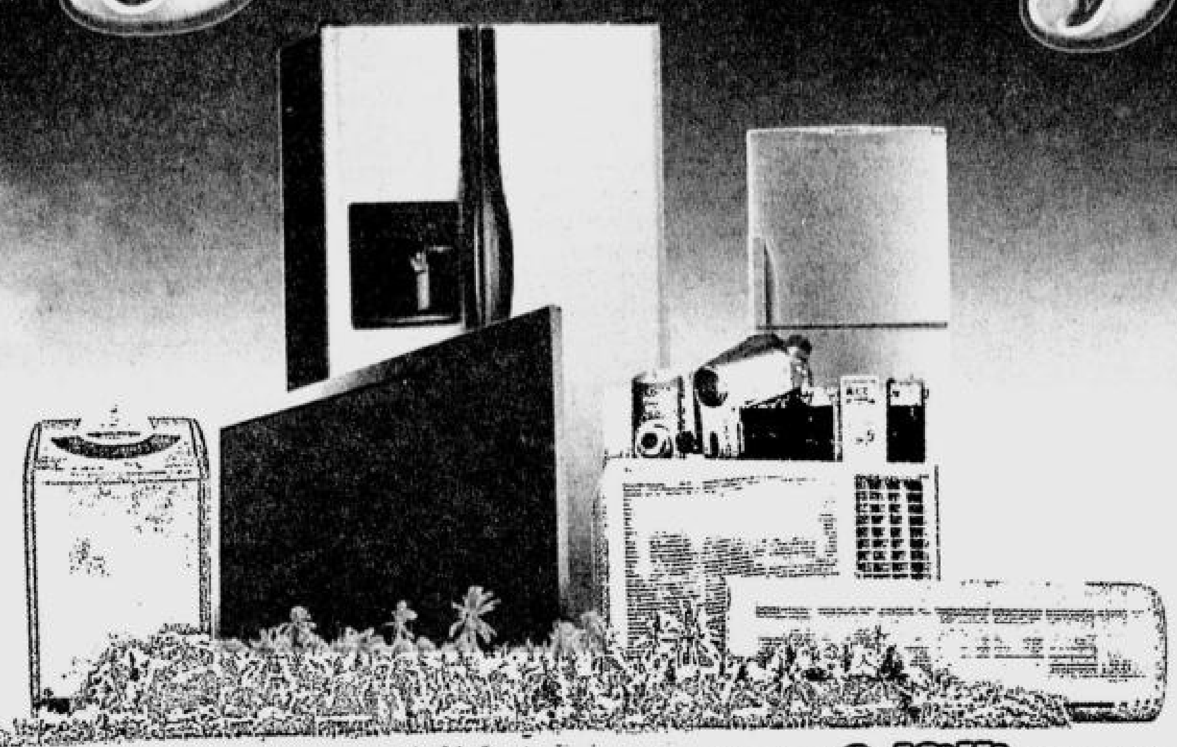

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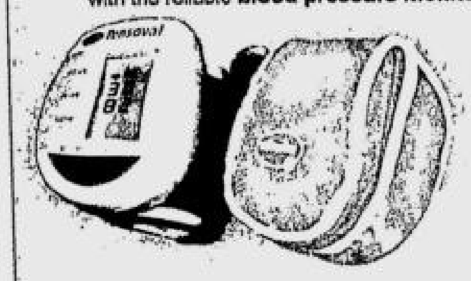

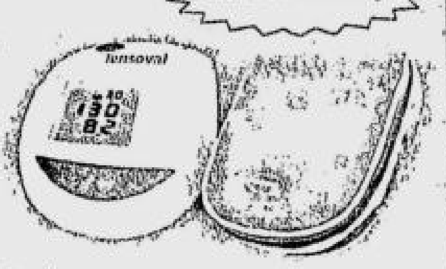

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# Workers to press for wage hike as oil prices soar

By Leila B. Salaverria

WORKERS WILL AGAIN PRESS FOR A wage hike on Labor Day next week as prices of basic goods and services are expected to go up in the wake of the latest spikes in crude oil prices in the world market.

Kilusang Mayo Uno chair Elmer Labog yesterday again sounded the call for a "long overdue" legislated wake hike in the light of the rising oil prices, saying the present minimum wage was not enough for most workers.

On Friday, crude oil prices rose to an all-time high of over $75 a barrel.

The higher oil prices prompted oil companies operating in the Philippines to increase gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by another 50 centavos.

"On Labor Day, the legislated wage hike would again be one of the major issues we will push. We've been asking for it for long a time. It's long overdue," Labog said in a phone interview.

The KMU has been campaigning for a legislated P125 across-the-board increase in the daily minimum wage.

Labog also said President Macapagal-Arroyo should have certified the wage hike bill as a top priority instead of such measures as the antiterrorism bill and issues like Charter change.

## Urgent bill

"With the rise in the prices of oil and basic commodities, the wage hike bill should have been the one declared urgent. Instead of thinking of the workers' welfare, she told Congress that the antiterrorism bill was urgent. That bill could even be used against us," Labog said.

Labor groups have questioned certain provisions in the antiterror bill that they said could be used to crack down on militant groups involved in labor disputes.

The KMU chair also said nonwage benefits given to workers like the withholding tax exemption for minimum wage earners were not enough to ease their burden given the continually rising cost of living.

Labog also said the P25-wage increase granted last year to minimum wage earners in the private sector was too small.

## Oil price controls

Meanwhile, another militant group said Malacañang should implement oil price controls to cushion the impact of rising oil prices on the public.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) claimed that the parent companies of Shell, Petron and Caltex—the three biggest oil companies in the Philippines—were involved in raising the price of oil.

"It is high time the government imposes price controls and pushes for centralized procurement to immediately cushion the impact of soaring prices of petroleum products and stop the Big Three from gaining super profits courtesy of their parent companies' massive speculation campaign to jack up global oil prices," the group said in a statement.

## No supply shortage

Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap, citing research by the Ibon Foundation, said there was no shortage of supplies in the global oil market and added that global production had increased by 490,000 barrels per day since February.

Hicap said oil companies and their agents had capitalized on the growing tension in Iran to justify the increase in the prices of petroleum products.

Pamalakaya suggested that oil price controls and a centralized procurement of petroleum products be imposed during an eight-month period starting May this year.

It said the eight-month period would enable Congress to repeal the Oil Deregulation Act and prepare the country for the nationalization of the oil industry.

It also warned of a political backlash from increasing oil prices.

"A situation of unbridled oil price increases, if not abated, will force the Filipino people to engage President Macapagal-Arroyo and her cartel clients into a major political showdown beginning May 1," Pamalakaya said.

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# Palace won't hesitate on nat'l emergency, says Defensor

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY WARNED IT would not hesitate to reimpose a state of emergency should the May 1 rallies which would reportedly be instigated by left and right wing forces escalate into armed violence.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor issued the warning after renegade military officers bared their plans to launch a fresh wave of destabilization moves against the government.

"I would like to remind them that while we have no plans to declare a state of emergency, that option is always there, especially if there is a threat of armed violence, particularly in the National Capital Region," said Defensor in an interview.

Malacañang is bracing for what military intelligence reports claimed was a plan by the leftist-rightist alliance to mobilize up to half a million protesters who would march on Malacañang on Labor Day, the fifth anniversary of the failed Edsa III people power launched by loyalists of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

On Friday, two fugitive Army officers—1st Lt. Sonny Sarmiento and Capt. Nathaniel Rabonza—bared in a TV interview that they would continue their fight and would be making their presence felt in the coming days.

On Feb. 24, President Macapagal-Arroyo imposed a state of national emergency through Proclamation No. 1017 ostensibly to avert an armed uprising that was hatched by military and leftist rebels at the height of the celebration of Edsa I. The President lifted the order a week later.

Defensor appealed to fugitive ex-Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and his group of renegade soldiers, who have been tagged as originators of the plan, to come forward and settle their cases with the government. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

"We are in constant touch with their lawyers and we have no problem settling the issue peacefully," said Defensor.

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 24, 2006
2nd Week of Easter
Fidelis of Sigmaringen

**1st Reading:** Acts 4:23-31
**Gospel:** John 3:1-8

Among the Pharisees there was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God to teach us, for no one can perform miraculous signs like yours unless God is with him."

Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again from above."

Nicodemus said, "How can there be rebirth for a grown man? Who could go back to his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you: No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Because of this, don't be surprised when I say: 'You must be born again from above.'

The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

**Commentary**

*When the Spirit had been given, the disciples seem impelled to keep speaking of Jesus the Risen Lord and they don't go easy on the crowds. They speak the truth about evil, injustice, murder (death penalty); and they know of some of the same reaction that Jesus knew, but they also know of some of the power of the Spirit that comes to them again and again. This is the lived experience of what Jesus sought to share with Nicodemus by night in his fear. This is being born again, without fear, facing the truth and standing with the risen Lord.*

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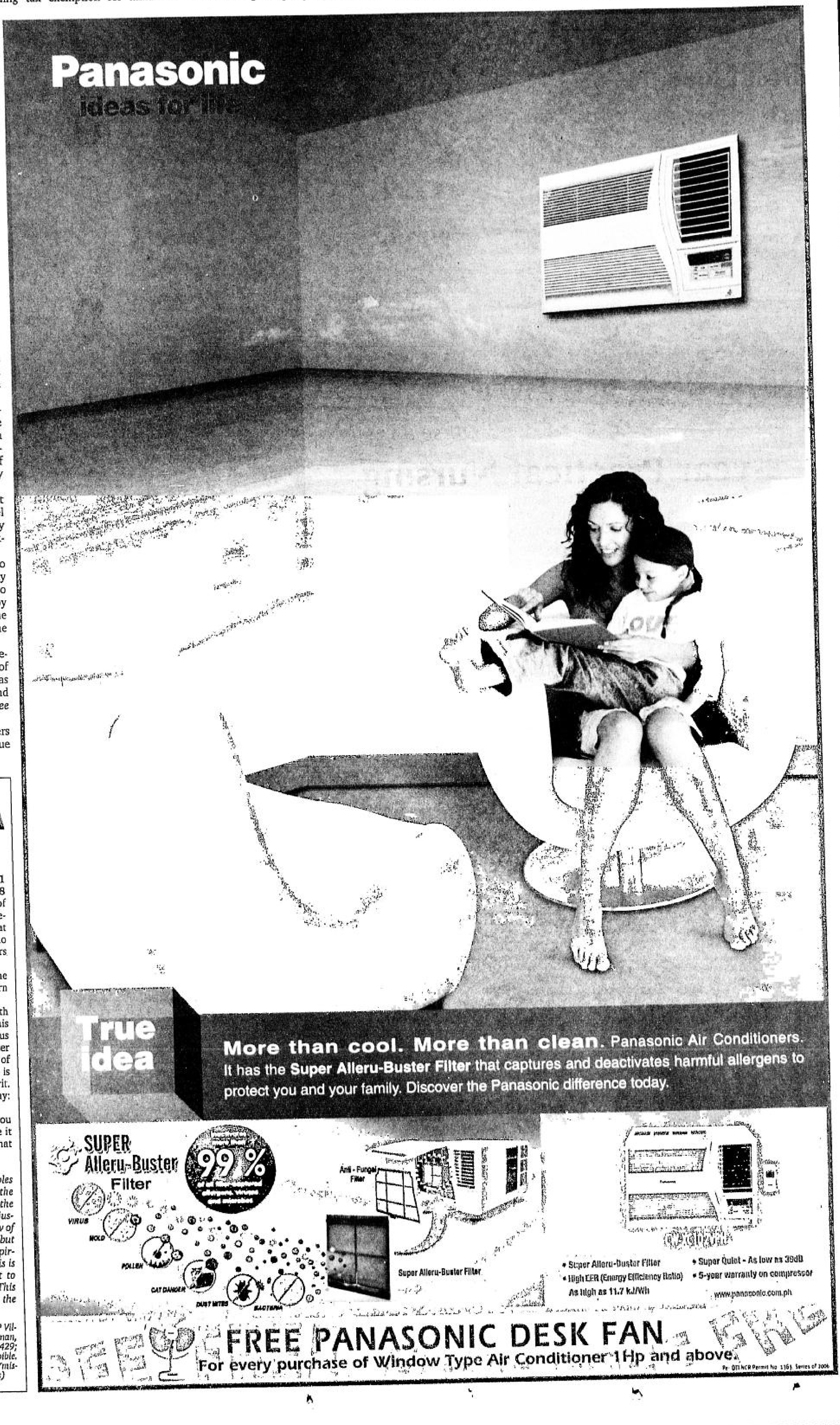
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# OPINION

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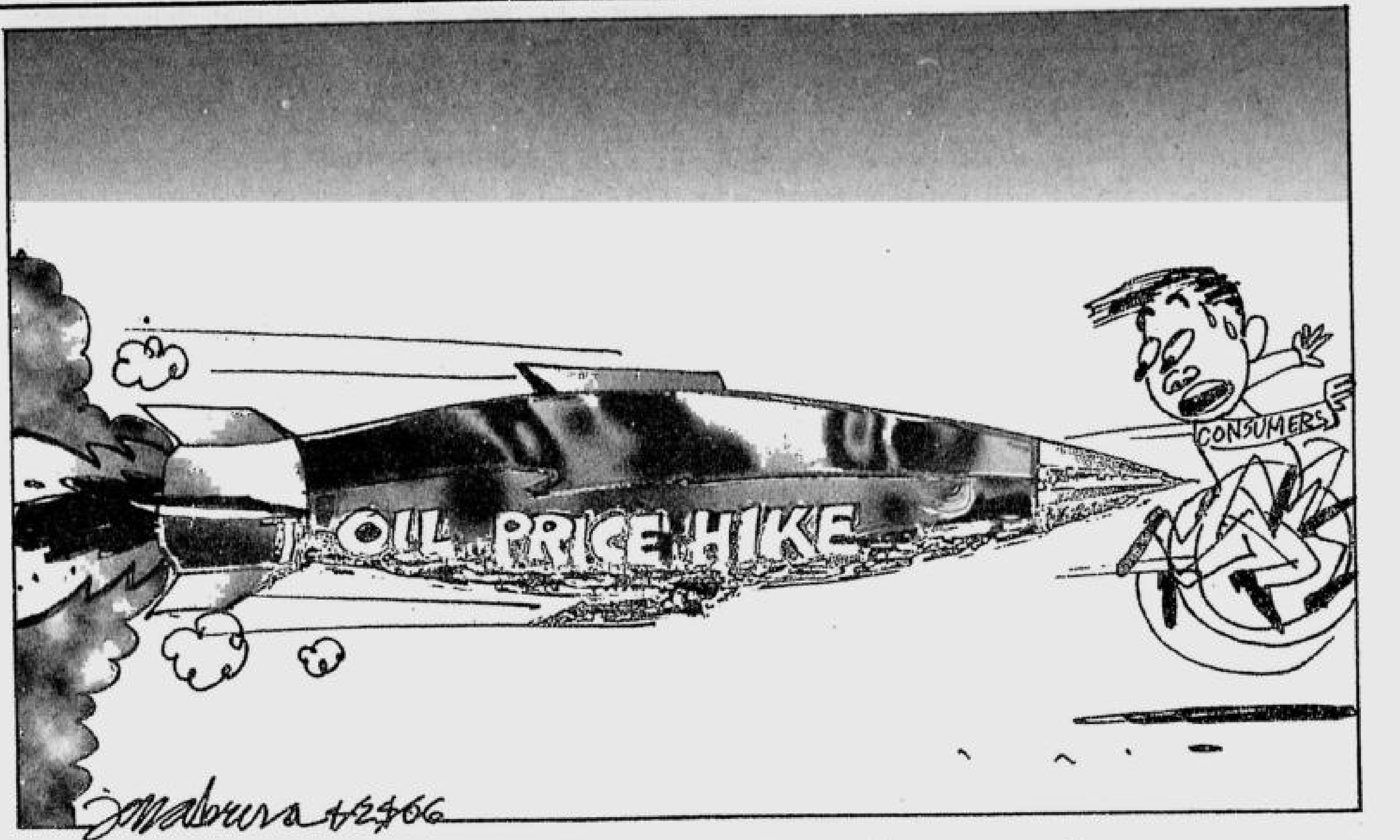

# Don't lose it

**EDITORIAL**

THE SUPREME COURT DECISION DECLARING two provisions of Executive Order 464 unconstitutional presents the public with the opportunity to help resolve the President's crisis of legitimacy. But we must make clear: The ruling does not constitute a license for the Senate—where the opposition to President Macapagal-Arroyo is concentrated—to wreak havoc on the democratic polity.

The decision should not be interpreted, in the words of administration congressman and Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin, as the first sign of an "open season" on administration officials and allies.

It certainly does not mean that the high court has done the work of the opposition or of those who want to hold the President to a strict accounting.

Reality check. According to the surveys conducted since the Hello Garci scandal erupted last June, public opinion about the President's culpability in the alleged election fraud has been remarkably steady. After an initial period of doubt, a majority of Filipinos are now convinced that election fraud did take place, and that the President was involved in it.

And yet, there is—there has been—no significant outrage in the streets, no sign that yet another flourish of People Power is imminent. Many reasons have been offered to explain this outrage gap; whatever the reason, it is a reality that opposition politicians must take fully into account.

If a majority of the public already believes that the 2004 elections were deeply flawed, surely it is not looking for more proof. We have written many times about the fertilizer fund scandal, to give only one example, and we will continue to write about it, as more sordid details emerge. But we are under no illusion that it is this scandal, or others like it, that will finally draw people into the streets.

In fact, we should all realize that, given the state of Philippine politics at the turn of the millennium, knowledge does not necessarily lead to action.

Does this mean we should let things be and, in the words of those who support the President, move on?

Not at all. We should continue the necessary work of holding all public officials to account, including the President. We should continue the necessary work of looking the President's crisis of legitimacy squarely in the eye. We should, not least, continue the necessary work of asking the tough questions.

But unless the opposition does not believe other sectors of society also have a role to play in this "necessary work," opposition politicians must conduct themselves differently. **Their** role must be to **win public assent** for the **process** our democratic polity has to rediscover, in order to resolve the political crisis.

One distinctive feature of the Supreme Court ruling, written by Associate Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, is its persuasive approach to the legal issues at hand. It keeps an even keel all throughout, and deploys arguments in such a way that even Palace apologists can read the finding as favoring the administration. Of course, the fact that the court decided unanimously is the persuasive factor par excellence. But the decision's careful balancing act must have helped win support from other justices, and recommends it to almost everyone in the public square.

The opposition must therefore use the ruling as an opportunity to build public consensus about the way we proceed from now on. The political theater of senators browbeating witnesses must come to an end. The spectacle of senators coming in late to hearings and repeating questions already asked must no longer be inflicted on the public. Not least, the practice of senators using the coercive power of the contempt citation as a punitive measure, as in the case of the (admittedly frustrating) testimony of National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, must stop. The democratic project is first about process, before it is about power.

Post-464, the public has the chance to show the nation a way out of the political crisis. The opposition shouldn't blow it.

# Gringo Honasan at Kapihan today

### As I See It

*Neal H. Cruz*

ONE PROJECT THAT THE PHILIPPINES needs desperately is a railway system. The Philippine government's biggest mistake was to allow the Philippine National Railways to deteriorate to its present pitiful state. We were seduced by American interests to let our railway system waste, and to build more roads instead—so that the American automotive companies could sell more trucks and cars to us.

The Americans did us a big disservice. They could not have won the great American West without the railroad. All the densely populated countries in the world rely on the railroad as a primary means of transportation. So do the countries with the biggest land masses, such as China, India and Russia. Continental Europe has an extensive rail network spanning several countries. Even the United States and Germany, which pioneered the freeways and the autobahn, respectively, give importance to the railroad. Trains and railroads allow for the quick transport of a great deal of cargo and people but at the least expense.

We used to have an operating rail line from San Fernando, La Union in the north to Legazpi, Albay in the south, until the 1960s. Gloria Macapagal—a little girl back then, whose father Diosdado was the President of the Philippines—used to take the train with her family up to Damortis whenever they would take their vacation in Baguio. Now the train to the north is no more and the slow train to the south runs only until Quezon.

The PNR has been dying for a long time but none of our officials paid any attention to it. Now we have realized that we can't do without a railroad. Without it, transporting people and goods is much slower and more expensive, especially now with the rising oil prices and with so many checkpoints to pass through, each one exacting its pound of flesh.

Putting up a railroad is very expensive, and the Philippines cannot do it alone. Even the United States, the richest country in the world, is not giving us a hand. Which is not surprising. After all, it was the one who lured us into neglecting our railway system.

Luckily, here comes China—now the maker of the fastest train in the world (it's no longer Japan)—offering us a loan, at the lowest interest rate, for the NorthRail project that will run from Manila to Clark Air Base in Pampanga.

The NorthRail will provide fast (120 km/hour) and reliable mass transportation for hundreds of thousands of passengers and goods between Metro Manila and Central and Northern Luzon; and between several military bases that have been converted into special economic and tourism zones (Fort Bonifacio, Clark Special Economic Zone, Subic and Poro Point in La Union). Operating at 5-minute intervals, it can decongest Metro Manila of its bursting population and of its heavy land and air traffic. (Once the international airport is transferred to Clark, trains can quickly and comfortably transport air passengers checking in at Manila to their planes in Clark.)

Moreover, trains are safer, faster, more energy-efficient and ecologically friendly. They also use less land area. The NorthRail project will generate thousands of jobs. And once completed, it can accommodate 164,745 passengers in its first year of operation. In its 10th year, the NorthRail is projected to serve 363,193 passengers per day. The NorthRail will take around $421 million to construct.

But from the very beginning, there was opposition to the NorthRail from politicians, and—in an irony of ironies—from squatters who have no right at all to the right-of-way of the railway system, which they are illegally occupying. And yet, they have the temerity to demand that the land be given to them permanently.

Some politicians have jumped on their bandwagon and filed cases on behalf of the squatters—despite the fact that, under very clear existing laws, they have no right to the land and to any financial help. Nevertheless, the government is relocating them to nine developed resettlement villages. Those who choose to go back to their home provinces are given P50,000 per family as financial help.

These relocation villages, located near their former homes, have been provided with water supply, electricity, sewerage services and concrete roads—amenities that they never enjoyed in their shanties along the *riles*. Schools and health centers are also being provided. These facilities for lawbreakers are costing the taxpayers billions of pesos.

The amortization for a house and lot in the relocation sites is payable in 25 to 30 years—P200 a month for the first five years, and P300 a month from the sixth to the 10th year. Not only that, former squatters will be given discounted fares in the trains.

Nevertheless, think of this: Those who are working in Metro Manila can go home, via a cheap and quick mode of transportation, to a wide, open place blessed with plenty of fresh air. And they don't have to bear the congestion in the city.

Politicians say that the project is overpriced, that it was not submitted for public bidding.

The answers to that are: first, the NorthRail is a double-track system, not like the present single-track system of the PNR. That naturally doubles the cost. As for the lack of public bidding, the China loan is a government-to-government contract signed by the Department of Finance and the China Export-Import Bank, a state-owned, Chinese financing institution. Under the contract, China has the right to designate the prime contractor for the project. China demanded that it be given this prerogative.

* * *

**At this morning's Kapihan sa Manila, former senator-turned-fugitive Gringo Honasan will hold a press conference to dispute the charges against him and to speak out his mind on the many issues now bedeviling the country.**

# Shining hour, too

### There's the Rub

*Conrado de Quiros*

I WAS TEMPTED TO COMPARE THE Supreme Court's decision to junk EO 464 with Manuel Villar's success in getting Congress to impeach Erap some years ago, and call it the Supreme Court's "shining hour." But there seems to be quite a difference. Villar's effort was brilliant and courageous. How he got a pro-Erap Congress to buck the Chief Executive showed huge political acumen, and how he got to push something this country had never tried before against a president whose popularity this country had never known before showed bigger balls. The Supreme Court has merely shown common sense.

As with most things the GMA regime has done, EO 464 was a non-issue as far as its intrinsic merits were concerned. It had none. As Fr. Joaquin Bernas has said, the brazenness of EO 464 was patent even to his first year students in law class. I will go further and say that the brazenness of EO 464 was patent even to the *istambays* in my neighborhood who congregate nightly among the stores, drinking themselves silly and arguing (noisily) about everything under the sun, or starless sky. The image that comes to mind is a priest telling a congregation whose hands are bound and whose mouths are taped, "If anyone has any objection to this marriage, speak up or forever be silent." And hearing no objection, proceeds to say, "I now proclaim you man and wife."

The issue before the Supreme Court was never a legal one, it was always a political one. It was never about substance, it was always about power. The real debate was not whether the government lawyers would be able to make a case for EO 464 or not, the real debate was whether the Court, like many other institutions of this country, would sell its soul to GMA or keep what was left of it. The Court decided to keep what was left of it. In the scheme of things, the justices did not do anything extraordinary, they merely did the obvious. They did not do anything adventurous, they merely did the commonsensical. They never did anything heroic, they merely did what needed to be done.

But such have things gotten in this country that merely doing the obvious, the commonsensical and what needs to be done now takes on the aspect of an accomplishment deserving of applause. Such have things gotten in this country that merely doing what is decent, logical and sensible now resonates with mystical or mythical overtones, deserving of inclusion in the annals of greatness. That was how it was during Marcos' time, the scale of rottenness being such, as to turn the most ordinary good deed into extraordinary heroism. In that sense, yes, the Supreme Court was resplendent last week when it ruled to put an end to an iniquity—no, a patent idiocy—that has held sway in the country for a while. It was the Court's shining hour, too.

Exceptionally so, since the justices ruled to a man, or woman, that EO 464 was iniquitous and idiotic. Not one of them bothered to defend the indefensible. I had half-expected the voting would be close—avariciousness, which has gripped virtually every institution of this country, being a natural incentive for building trenches to defend a tottering castle, or Palace. I had even half-expected EO 464 to be upheld. That no one defended it, well—who knows?—maybe, the justices attended the same retreat GMA did, the one that called for people to discern good and evil, but unlike her, profited from it.

But lest we think to bring out the champagne, let us remember what all this does is merely to bring us back to square one. No, well, before square one. Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani and Lt. Col. Alexander Balutan are still facing court martial for defying EO 464 (an ice pick plunged into the heart of democracy) which should have never existed in the first place. And Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga's five-man fact-finding team—the only thing truthful there is the word "vice," nothing else is—just recently found Generals Hermogenes Esperon, Gabriel Habacon and Roy Kyamko innocent of rigging the 2004 elections in favor of GMA. Mayuga's explanation was classic: "Not one of the witnesses testified on any direct knowledge whether or not they participated in any election fraud." Truly, it makes you think of a priest asking a congregation with tape on their mouths to speak up if they have any objection to a marriage or forever be silent.

Indeed, we still have cops routinely breaking up rallies as a "calibrated response" to protest. We have GMA ignoring the Supreme Court ruling that the Cha-cha has no enabling law. We have Raul Gonzalez still trying to intimidate media, my friend Billy Esposo (against whom Mike Arroyo has filed a libel case and now has a hold order at Immigration, which cruelly denies him his freedom to seek fine food abroad). No less than The New York Times has noted GMA's drift toward dictatorship to protect corruption and an illegitimate rule. We have quite a way before we simply get back to square one.

But that said, the Supreme Court ruling on EO 464 offers the glimpse of hope that we, like Dorothy in the "Wizard of Oz," can find our way home. At the very least, it opens a "Pandora's box" on the GMA regime, as her worried allies in Congress warn; though such is the quality of their minds that opening the lid on the truth should loom to them as unleashing evil upon the world. At the very most, it restores a proper perspective on things. The problem is not the Charter, it is Gloria. The truth about the presidential system has been openly expressed, the truth about the (non-)president has been violently suppressed. My thanks to the justices of the Court for drawing attention where attention is due.

Maybe it's not time to open the champagne yet. But some very good red wine will do.

# Can she? Or can she not?

**SOUNDING BOARD**

*Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.*

THE MASS GRANT OF COMMUTATION TO death convicts has stirred a hornet's nest. While some cheer it, others criticize it as an act of political opportunism, even defiance directed at both Congress and the Supreme Court. There is need to sort out the various claims. But my conclusion is that she can!

First of all, let it be said that a commutation of sentence can only be given to those whose convictions have become final. It does not apply to those whose cases are still on appeal. Hence, less than a thousand stand to benefit from the grant of commutation.

Secondly, what the President granted was not a pardon. It was a commutation of death sentences to life imprisonment. It is therefore not correct to say that death convicts will go unpunished. Life in our prisons is by no means a picnic. Try it!

Thirdly, there is no question about the President's power to commute death sentences, or even to pardon convicts. That the Constitution gives the President the power of executive clemency is a tacit admission that human institutions are imperfect and that there are infirmities in the administration of justice. The record of Supreme Court reversals of lower court convictions proves the point. Moreover, in recent years, executive clemency has also been used as a bargaining chip in the efforts to unify various warring forces.

Fourthly, the exercise of the power of executive clemency is left purely to the discretion of the President. Neither the Court nor Congress may limit it. In fact, there are only four constitutional limitations on the power of executive clemency. Except in cases of amnesty, it can only be granted after final conviction, it may not be given to those convicted by an impeachment court. Political amnesty needs the concurrence of Congress, and election offenses may be pardoned only upon the recommendation of the Commission on Elections.

Finally, and this is the disputed part, may the President grant mass pardon or commutation?

There is nothing in the Constitution which says that executive clemency is only for individuals, on a case-by-case basis. In fact, in American jurisprudence, whence our constitutional system derives, the power to pardon already includes the power to amnesty. In fact, one of the early assumptions about the power of executive clemency was that it included the power to pardon specified classes or communities wholesale. Thus, even without any constitutional provision on amnesty, Washington exercised it in 1795, Adams in 1800, Madison in 1815, Lincoln in 1863, Johnson in 1865, 1867 and 1868, and the first Roosevelt—to Aguinaldo's followers—in 1902.

It is true that our Constitution says that amnesty may only be granted with the concurrence of Congress. You have to look at the 1935 background of this provision. In its long debate on whether executive clemency should be given only after conviction, the 1934 Constitutional Convention—in the desire to be able to grant clemency to political offenders even before prosecution—decided to separate amnesty for political offenders from all other acts of clemency. I take this to mean that if the President wishes to grant executive clemency to other kinds of offenders en masse, the only limitations are the four found in the Constitution.

Can it be said therefore that, aside from the four constitutional limitations I enumerated above, the President is totally free to grant executive clemency to whomsoever she wishes? Well, there is, of course, that general provision which authorizes the Supreme Court "to determine whether there has been a grave abuse of discretion on the part of any branch or instrumentality of the government." Assume that we can read the President's mind and see that she did what she did in order to win political brownie points. Would that count as grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction?

Those who wish to pin the President down on the basis of grave abuse of discretion will have to reckon with the accepted definition of grave abuse of discretion. Our Supreme Court has said on more than one occasion: "By grave abuse of discretion is meant such capricious and whimsical exercise of judgment as is equivalent to lack of jurisdiction. The abuse of discretion must be patent and gross as to amount to an evasion of positive duty or a virtual refusal to perform a duty enjoined by law, or to act at all in contemplation of law, as where the power is exercised in an arbitrary and despotic manner by reason of passion or hostility."

But has not the Supreme Court also said that an unconstitutional act is a grave abuse of discretion? True; but to say that mass commutation is an unconstitutional act begs the question.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has received her "grave abuse of discretion" with approval. So have millions of others. But the President's clemency objective has not yet been completed. My hope is that she will use whatever influence she has to push her certified bill seeking the abolition of the death penalty. Or will she be deterred by the fear that whatever brownie points she may have gained by her Easter proclamation will be erased by a more aggressive and final move against the death penalty? I hope that all her energy and courage have not yet been exhausted by her ill-advised drive for constitutional revision by initiative and referendum!

# Of separation and privilege: SC on EO 464

**COMMENTARY**

*Fr. Ranhilio Callangan Aquino*

THERE ARE TWO PROPOSITIONS THE SUPREME Court rejects in its judgment on EO 464: first, Congress has the power to summon department heads at any time it pleases; second, the President can withhold information Congress requires from her or from her political agents on a bare claim of executive privilege.

The Court draws a distinction between Section 21 and Section 22 of the Constitution. The latter section governs inquiries by the legislature in the exercise of its power of oversight. The department head may appear under either of two circumstances: on his own initiative, with the consent of the President; or upon the request of either House. The Court construes "request" as it ordinarily means—a supplication that may be rejected or denied. Some petitioners—commentators on the Constitution even—suggest that "request" is merely a courteous way of putting "order" or "direct." The Supreme Court applies the "ordinary meaning" rule of construction and finds it significant that under Section 22, Congress may only "request" the appearance of department heads.

What EO 464 validly does is require department heads "requested" or "invited" under Section 22 to get the consent of the President—which quite obviously she may withhold. Under the doctrine of separation of powers then, the President may direct her department heads not to appear before either house of Congress, in inquiries into the performance of government.

However, when Congress inquires in aid of legislation, the only effective plea against compulsory appearance is "executive privilege." It is important to note that the Court does not reject the efficacy of a plea of executive privilege against the summons of Congress to hearings in aid of legislation. It rules, however, that a mere claim to executive privilege will not suffice; the President must clearly invoke the privilege and declare to Congress why the information is privileged.

But the Court cautions Congress against demanding from the President an explanation for the invocation of executive privilege—that would be tantamount to asking for a disclosure of information that the executive has determined should be withheld. This cautionary note, I submit, Congress cannot dismiss in cavalier fashion; for making such a demand would arguably constitute grave abuse of discretion against which the constitutionally vested power of judicial review would apply.

Equally important is the Court's doctrine that a claim of executive privilege will lie against Congress. The Court does not venture to itemize matters that may be protected by the mantle of executive privilege. It does, however, lay standards. "Executive privilege, as already discussed, is recognized with respect to information the confidential nature of which is **crucial** to the fulfillment of the unique role and responsibilities of the executive branch, or in those instances where exemption from disclosure is **necessary** to the discharge of **highly important** executive responsibilities." The fact that the terms "crucial," "necessary" and "highly important" are susceptible to varied acceptations is obvious, but the indeterminacy in this respect is crucial to the exercise of executive discretion. The fact that the Court has laid down standards is significant in the light of Francisco v. House of Representatives. There, the Court set the boundaries of judicial review. Where there are constitutional standards, judicial review will lie.

It is important then to be clear about what the Court declared void: the bare claim of privilege—implied in particular—bereft of any ground for the claim.

Constituting as it does a derogation of the power of Congress to summon, the claim of executive privilege—and the justification of the claim—must issue from the President herself (who may authorize the executive secretary to raise the claim in her behalf). This is another way of requiring that the President herself determine whether the matter she wishes kept from congressional inquiry is "crucial" to the exercise of her duties as Chief Executive, that exemption from disclosure is "necessary" and that the matter is "highly important" to the discharge of her constitutional duties. She cannot delegate to others this exercise of executive discretion.

The Court goes so far as to outline the procedure that should be followed: After Congress summons an official, sufficient time must be allowed the official to inform the President or the executive secretary of the need to invoke the privilege. The President then makes the determination and then must communicate to Congress her invocation of the right, while amply justifying the claim.

The danger of abuse lies on both sides. Congress may abuse its claim to inquire in aid of legislation. The Court suggests that Congress mention in its summons the legislation it proposes to enact. The President may likewise stymie the power of Congress to exact information for purposes of legislation by routinely invoking "executive privilege."

In the first place, abuse of discretion is the risk of discretion—and discretion is essential to the operation of government and even to the administration of justice. Secondly, the best safeguard against abuse is the election of mature and prudent citizens to the highest of offices. Thirdly, against grave abuse of discretion, the Court may wield its power in a proper action.

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# Generation gap

**THE LONG VIEW**

*Manuel L. Quezon III*

I WAS RECENTLY INVITED TO A KIND OF preliminary discussion on how to analyze a sobering question: Why has the Philippines become increasingly uncompetitive? The debate among the participants immediately focused on when the decline in competitiveness began. In 1946, with the Philippine Independence (which many believe was premature); or in 1961, when thrusts toward Philippine industrialization gave way to the more liberal economic policies of Diosdado Macapagal's presidency?

I found myself taking the 1961 viewpoint for reasons entirely political and not economic. To my mind, the passing of the torch of leadership from the pre-war leaders to a younger, post-war breed (personified by Ramon Magsaysay) was nipped in the bud by his death. The reversal that followed thereafter was in turn reversed, in fits and starts, with President Garcia's defeat. However, both Presidents Macapagal and Marcos were unable to harness the spirit of change. The result: their generation faced a challenge in the late 1960s from an even younger generation—the challenge translating into a counter-revolution during martial law. We have not recovered from the unhealthy effects of martial law, which prevented a healthy—and natural—transition from one generation to another.

The contemporaries of Marcos held on to power for so long. During Marcos' 1972-1986 dictatorship, we could have elected no less than four presidents (in 1973, 1977, 1981, 1985), had the 1935 Constitution endured. For the generations born between the 1920s and early 1940s, they essentially lost their chance to rise in leadership and represent their contemporaries in national life. Think of the consequences of delay. In 1953, the last generation of leaders born in the 19th century gave way to the first generation born in the 20th (Magsaysay was born in 1907). After the last hurrah of the previously displaced 1890s generation (Garcia, born in 1896, a contemporary of predecessors Quirino [1890] and Roxas [1892]—themselves successors of the 1878 generation of Quezon and Osmeña)—the country was prepared for those born in the first decades of the 20th century: Macapagal (1910) and Marcos (1917).

By 1973, the presidency was ripe for the picking for those born in the '20s and '30s: the expected leading contenders included Gerardo Roxas (1924) and Ninoy Aquino (1932). We could also have had Ramos (1928) and Estrada (1937) as presidents much earlier. And we might not have had to wait until 2001 for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (1947) to be the first chief executive born a free Filipino. Her generation was actually prepared for the presidency in 1987—that is, if we take 40 as the age requirement for the presidency. We are, then, in a sense, almost 20 years behind schedule in terms of generations assuming the mantle of leadership. An extended delay means that our current crop of leaders are past their prime—exhausted, embittered, cynical and desperate, after waiting so long, they wish to extend their hold on power now that they've finally achieved it.

How often have we heard of our past having been dominated by young leaders? And yet how little do we wonder over the increasingly geriatric nature of our leadership over the past 40 years? We hear even less about how a particular political tradition—that of mentoring new leaders—has vanished. I once made a chart comparing the connections of presidents with their successors, and noticed that until the time of Marcos, every president received some kind of tutoring from previous presidents. But with Marcos, the tradition died—as the dictatorship focused more on crushing potential successors (read: rivals) than on building up a generation to take over. No subsequent president, with the possible exception of Ramos, has given attention to the question of helping to create a successor generation.

It comes as no surprise, then, that what happened to the presidency also took place in other walks of life. Remember the late Rafael Salas? Frustrated with his stint in government service, he moved to the United Nations where he made a notable imprint. His decision to work abroad exemplified his generation's—and subsequent Filipino generations'—drift toward pursuing career growth overseas.

Since the 1960s, we've had some of the best and brightest Filipinos going overseas (the 1960s generation is now retiring, boosting the real estate market with its retirement dollars), and since then, the trajectory of our generational efforts has been aimed at overseas—not local—success.

Which brings us to the crisis of the middle class. This socio-economic class fueled the Magsaysay generational shift of the 1950s, but it was frightened into being an accomplice to martial law in the 1970s.

In the same meeting, an economist said he was working on a theory to prove that 1983-84 was a watershed year of corruption. In that year, the most serious economic crisis in living memory transformed Philippine society. Corruption became endemic across class lines. It was, he suggested, the year that corruption became the rule and not the exception. The anti-Marcos struggle, joined that year by the middle class, culminated in Edsa—a victory that rewarded a plague of hungry politicians only too eager to get their paycheck for their years of being suppressed under Marcos. To that extent the pre-martial law elite, which until then could claim a certain amount of self-control, displayed none at all, once in power. And so, it exempted itself from land reform. But not the middle class—teachers, doctors, office workers, who had saved up to own lands—it subjected to immediate and enthusiastic land reform. Seeing itself squeezed out, the middle class voted with its feet. It continues to do so.

# Filipino diaspora

**COMMENTARY**

*Butch Hernandez*

LAST APRIL 14, AT THE BLOOMBERG WEBSITE, PHYLLIS Harris, special education director for the Oakland Unified School District, stated in an article that "US schools that train special education teachers [SPED] simply don't produce enough to satisfy the needs we have nationally. The Philippines is one of several countries, including Spain and Canada, that produce more educators than they have need for."

In that same write-up, recruiter Mary Willis recounted how she spent several fruitless months trying to find SPED teachers for San Mateo, California until she went to the Philippines, where she "hired a dozen on the spot."

The number of competent Filipino teachers leaving the country is growing. The Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics reports that in 2002, more than 2,000 teachers landed teaching jobs abroad, about half of them employed by US public schools. The rest were hired by European and Middle East countries. In 1992 only 112 teachers were hired by schools overseas.

In her "Situationer on Philippine Education," published in the July-August 2005 issue of the UP Forum Online, Jo Florendo Lontoc said that "[with] ridiculously low salaries, heavy teaching and non-teaching loads, crowded classrooms, a stifling bureaucracy, corruption at various levels and the lack of opportunities for career and personal growth, it is no surprise that there is an exodus of teachers, even as domestic helpers and caregivers. Like many other Filipinos who choose to work abroad, grade school and high school teachers are leaving the country in droves due primarily to irresistible, higher wages elsewhere. Although the exodus is literally breaking up the Filipino family, the financial security it offers in exchange seems worth all the trouble."

Landing a good job in North America is never easy, any immigrant can attest to this. For an experienced educator trained in the Philippines, qualifying for a teaching job in the United States can be doubly hard. Existing state and federal norms are so stringent that only our best and brightest teachers stand an above-average chance of getting hired. Moreover, the successful applicant usually spends about $7,500 to defray recruitment, visa and airfare expenses. But the prize is a job that pays about 10 times more.

Of course, working abroad has its share of adjustment problems, such as less than ideal living quarters, homesickness and the occasional friction that comes when two cultures collide.

Dr. Francisca Miranda, originally from the Philippines, is the Sequoia Union High School district's deputy superintendent for Educational Services in Redwood, California. She says that newly hired Filipino teachers usually point to classroom discipline as their main problem among adjustment concerns. "American public school students can be quite rowdy" says Dr. Miranda "and they have no problem talking back."

However, the "overflowing school resources and very small class sizes" substantially make the difficulties easier to bear. This is the reason most teachers do not hesitate to renew their contracts, even if they teach in notoriously tough inner city public schools.

The brain drain issue invariably crops up during community-level discussions initiated by the Foundation for Worldwide People Power as it advances the cause of Education Revolution throughout the country.

As a first step in those discussions, we encourage interested members of a particular community to talk about what quality education means to them. We then range their expectations against the problems and issues the public schools in their community routinely deal with. With a little luck, a discussion's loose group of individuals gels into a school community, motivated enough to sit down and draft a workable plan to improve the quality of education and learning outcomes in their particular public school.

During these community gatherings, quite a number of well-meaning parents and education stakeholders have expressed a growing concern—that their children are on the losing end, because all the good teachers are apparently trying to leave the country for high-paying jobs in the United States and Europe.

Arguably, the Philippine scenario casts a different hue because it is our teachers—rather than our scholars—who are being lured away from our schools. If there are no good teachers, how can we have quality education?

The Filipino diaspora today is the third largest in the world. It counts around 8 million Filipinos living or working abroad. China's diaspora is the largest, with some 35 million; while India's is second at about 22 million.

Gerry Cruz, who now lives in Canada, is one of those who sought a better life outside their country. He and Dr. Miranda of California personify the Filipino's best traits abroad: innate intelligence, honesty and that distinctive warmth of personality.

Dr. Miranda's job as an education official in the United States is a difficult one, yet she still finds the time and the inclination to gather books and instructional materials for public schools here. Cruz recently came across the Education Revolution in an article written by FWWPP president Maria Lim Ayuyao. After reading the commentary, he asked a simple question: "How can we help?"

In a roundtable discussion (among academic experts) on the brain drain as it affects Philippine education, Prof. Jorge V. Sibal of the UP School of Labor and Industrial Relations said, "We can study and replicate what our Asian neighbors have done successfully. It is a matter of having the right kind of political leadership and culture. Japan deliberately sent their young Meiji scholars abroad to study modern technologies and work in America and Europe. They urged them later to come back and help industrialize Japan. Taiwan appealed to overseas Chinese to invest in their industrial zones and save the country from borrowing from the World Bank. Korea banked on the earnings of their overseas workers to build their targeted industries. India built their new technopark in order to lure back their engineers and scientists to develop software and programs in their native land rather than in California technoparks."

According to Professor Sibal, the brain drain phenomenon is "a coping mechanism of an economy in crisis ... but we cannot really equate working abroad with abandoning one's obligation to the native land, especially if the purpose is to pursue higher knowledge and acquire new experiences and skills while getting better compensation."

*(You may send e-mail to the author at execdir@fwwpp.org)*

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# Economy, environment's caretaker

MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES while fostering economic development is the smartest thing to do. It's not a choice between ecology and economy. Unless we protect our natural resources, we cannot sustain economic growth.

Today, economics is taught in schools without any consideration of its most fundamental component—environment, the system of nature on which all economic life must ultimately depend.

For example, economists measure the value of produce coming from a farm but do not subtract the cost of topsoil erosion and toxic run-off from chemical fertilizers and insecticides, as well as the costs to the farmworkers' health, according to Kirkpatrick Sale.

Actually, ecology and economy come from the same Greek word *"oikos,"* which means ecology or habitat; and *"oikonomos,"* which means household manager.

Therefore, the caretaker or "household manager" of our ecology is the economy. And the base of all economic activities is the security, supply and quality of the very elements that support life—air, water and soil. Sadly, the current economic thinking does not regard deforestation, soil degradation, air and water pollution as costs of economic activity.

Happily, all is not lost. There are many exciting things we can do to reverse the sad situation.

1. An energy transition is necessary. Harness and store the world's vast supply of wind, biomass and other forms of solar energy which are more abundant than oil. Solar cells, wind turbines and fuel cells can power factories, homes, automobiles and aircraft. "Clean Energy Now!"

2. A shift to organic farming; a shift away from excessive consumption of chemical products; and application of the precautionary principle to the chemical industry.

3. Stabilize population by improving the economic and social status of women; design cities in ways that reduce distances between home and work, shopping and school; and in urban transit systems, shift emphasis from cars to public transportation, cycling and walking.

4. Stop the rush to use genetically modified organisms in agriculture.

5. Reduce the use of pesticides because public health is non-negotiable.

6. Reduce the use of harmful chemicals in the production process. For example, glucose is better than benzene; paper can be bleached without use of chlorine or chlorine-based compounds.

7. Immediately, Senate and Congress should review all environment laws and all economic policies. Blend ecology and economy and make the universal law of "If you love nature, nature will love you back" work.

8. Revamp the educational system from Grade 1 to college. Make moral values the main priority and love for nature will follow. Moral decay leads to nowhere.

9. Excessive logging, mining and fishing are an assault on the soul of the environment.

10. For a change, let us lead simple lives to give nature a breather. Let us buy only what we need.

Decree that ecology and economy are now the national policy.

Decree that the Philippines is healthy and wealthy.

—**LEONARDA N. CAMACHO**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

## Unfair characterization

WE, THE RESIDENTS OF MARIES VILlage, Tierra Gloria and the Max Co Compound in Tandang Sora, Quezon City, resent Neal Cruz's utterly unfair characterization of our communities as freeloaders. (PDI, 4/10/06)

Our villages are small communities accessible via Tierra Pura and Mira Nila. Most of us here are middle-class families who, like Cruz—a resident of Mira Nila—pay city and national taxes, too.

For years, we paid for stickers from both villages just so we can get to our homes. Is this an ideal situation? No. In an ideal world, we would have direct access to a main thoroughfare. We believe nobody should pay a toll to get home and that roads in this city ought to be public property maintained by the city for the good of all. But this is not the case, and we complied with the sticker requirements of the two bigger and richer communities for more than 10 years. This is not what freeloaders or tightwads do.

We also accept the notion that we ought to contribute in some small way to the upkeep of the roads. This is why we agreed to the sticker fees that, until this year, have been fairly reasonable. We are not, as Cruz said, reluctant to "share a small part of the burden."

The developers of Maries Village and Tierra Gloria paid a lump sum to give village residents the right of way to pass through Tierra Pura and Mira Nila. If Cruz does not know this, we will be happy to show him the 1978 contract that spells this out.

Finally, we ought to distinguish between road use and security. If the homeowners of Mira Nila feel the need to contract so many security guards, then they must pay for them, much in the same way we pay for our private security without insisting that our neighbors share in the burden.

Cruz did not mention in his column that (1) the Mira Nila clubhouse was built with the help of public funds. Ask former congressmen Dante Liban and Chuck Mathay; and (2) the main roads of the subdivision were given a new coat of asphalt, again with the help of the Quezon City government.

Cruz also failed to mention that we pay Tierra Pura P400 per sticker, P200 of which goes to Mira Nila. Not satisfied with this cut, the homeowners' association of Mira Nila has unilaterally decided to charge us P500 more for a sticker which was P250 in the past. Worse, it charges its own residents only P250 for their stickers, a fact Cruz conveniently did not mention. Also, he didn't mention the fact that their guards shake down every school bus and delivery vehicle that enters through the Mira Nila gates.

—**MIGUEL REY, president,**
**Maries Village Homeowners' Association;**
**ROBERTO DY, president, Tierra Gloria Homeowners' Association;**
**MEYNARDO BAUTISTA, president, Max Co Compound Homeowners' Association**

## Ebdane was not on a holiday trip

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM titled, "22 officials join Gloria in Baguio retreat; 9 abroad," (PDI, 4/12/06) which reported that Public Works Secretary Hermogenes E. Ebdane Jr. was one of "the nine Cabinet secretaries who opted to spend the holiday abroad."

Actually, Secretary Ebdane was in Jakarta, Indonesia as our country's official representative to the 62nd Annual Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Escap).

—**ELIZABETH PILORIN,**
**OIC-chief,**
**Public Information Division,**
**Department of Public Works and Highways, Manila**

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*The Office of the Press Secretary and the Presidential Management Staff distributed to the newsmen covering the Mansion a list which stated that nine secretaries were abroad, without specifying where they were. The list turned out to be erroneous also because some of the people whose names were on it, including Secretary Ebdane, turned up later in the week to join President Macapagal-Arroyo in Baguio.*

—**VINCENT CABREZA,**
**correspondent,**
**PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

## Next move: It's up to the people

THE POLITICAL CRISIS CONTINUES to worsen and doesn't look like it's about to end. In fact, many Filipinos are starting to lose hope in this country. The root of this crisis can be traced to the pestering questions about President Macapagal-Arroyo's legitimacy.

Instead of resolving the questions through the impeachment process, her allies made a mockery of the Constitution. Their action not only demoralized millions of Filipinos who wanted to know the truth, it also created more doubts about GMA's legitimacy.

Today, GMA and her allies in the House of Representatives are working hard to revise the Constitution and transform our system of government from presidential to parliamentary. They claim that Charter change fits the Philippine setting. Their true intention, however, is to perpetuate themselves in power and to get rid of the Senate, which at present has proven itself to be a stumbling block to the administration's self-serving designs.

In fact, GMA issued EO 464, in an attempt to disable the Senate from investigating irregularities involving administration officials and GMA supporters. And lest civilians become pesky by exercising their freedom of expression, she issued Proclamation 1017.

I was for GMA before, but not anymore. But like the silent majority, I don't see anybody in the opposition as a better alternative. Nevertheless, I encourage every Filipino, whether in the public or private sector, not to remain silent but to make known his or her stand.

If you don't trust GMA, put a sticker "I don't trust GMA" on your cars, houses, offices, tennis rackets, cups, T-shirts, cell phones or on anything visible. Then let's plan our next move.

—**LEO S. DACANAY,**
**L3 B3, Hollywood Subdivision,**
**Barangay 74, Tacloban City**

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## Businessmen, politicians support transparent Customs collector

THIS IS A REACTION TO RAMON Tulfo's "Precious gifts from BOC." (PDI, 3/30/06)

Tulfo claimed that Cebu port collector, lawyer Lourdes V. Mangaoang, is a non-performer, had a collection deficit of 7.8 percent during the period January to March 23, and that her continued stay in Cebu—despite her inefficiency—has caused demoralization in the bureau. Tulfo also suggested that her continued stay at the Cebu Port was made possible by a Department of Finance official who had been captivated by her charms.

These are the facts: The Cebu Port fell short of its 2005 collection target. But the negative deviation was due to the tremendous decrease in the volume of shipments landing at the Cebu Port, coupled with a much higher percentage increase in targets.

Despite the decrease, Mangaoang, through transparency, trade liberalization and continuous consultations with all stakeholders, was able to collect P3.850 billion in 2005 compared to P3.1 billion collected by her predecessors for the same period in 2004. The target for 2005 was increased by 38 percent—very much higher than the traditional 10 percent increment the previous years.

In May 2005, Mangaoang collected P600 million as against the target of P300 million, for a surplus of P300 million in May alone. In June, the surplus was P12.6 million. It was only in July, at the height of an attempt to overthrow the Arroyo administration, that the collection suffered some setbacks.

No way can Tulfo blame the drastic drop of volume of importation on Mangaoang; investors and markets alike react drastically to political uncertainties.

Tulfo should not zero in on Mangaoang. The shortfall in Customs collection was nationwide due to the drop in imports. Besides, Mangaoang's deficit was only 1.7 percent; all other ports registered deficits ranging from 35 percent to 42 percent.

The talk about Mangaoang catching the fancy of a DOF official is cheap intrigue, uncalled for, a product of a sexually polluted mind's wild hallucination.

Proof of Mangaoang's feat is the overwhelming support of the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mactan Export Processing Zone Chamber of Exporters and Manufacturers (Mepzcem), Philexport Cebu, Chamber of Customs Brokers Inc., Professional Customs Brokers Association of the Philippines, League of Municipal Mayors, and Cebu congressmen, all of whom have asked Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves to retain her.

The pen has awesome powers when used to ferret out the truth, but when these powers are used blatantly to malign or to serve selfish interests, the writer goes down to the level of nomads. Is Tulfo one of them?

—**DEO R. ALBERCA,**
**vice president,**
**Prof'l Development, CCBI-Cebu**
**dialberca@skyinet.net**

## Travel clearance for persons below 18

THIS REFERS TO THE NEWS story titled, "Kids' travels eased," which was published in the INQUIRER on April 12. It reported that a person aged 18 years and below no longer needs a travel clearance from the Department of Social Welfare and Development under certain circumstances.

We wish to clarify that a person who has reached his or her 18th birthday can travel alone without securing a travel clearance.

However, a person below 18 years old, traveling alone or with someone other than his or her parents, needs to secure a travel clearance from the DSWD. The travel clearance is required as a measure to prevent child-trafficking.

—**CELIA C. YANGCO,**
**undersecretary,**
**Department of Social Welfare and Development, Quezon City**

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# Prime suspect claims police torture

## Retracts statement implicating solon in killing of Comelec exec

**By Peter La. Julian**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

CAMP DIEGO SILANG, LA UNION—THE PRINCIPAL suspect in the Jan. 12 slaying of the election officer in Bauang town has retracted his statement that admitted his participation and which implicated La Union Rep. Tomas Dumpit Sr. and four others in the crime.

In a counter-affidavit he signed on April 17, Ares Mato, the suspected killer of Bauang election registrar Filemon Asperin Jr., said he was forced by policemen into signing a fabricated confession in exchange for his life and that of his family.

That confession implicated Dumpit Sr.; his son Thomas Jr., a former police officer; the lawmaker's daughter, Tess Dumpit-Michelena; SPO1 Eduardo Banay, an aide of Dumpit; and Vice Mayor Clyde Crispino of Caba town, in the murder.

Mato said he was tortured and beaten up by policemen until he signed the confession.

### Concoction

But the head of the task force that investigated Asperin's murder denied that the police tortured Mato.

"The police will not do that thing. They just concocted that," Supt. Franklin Bucayu, La Union police director and head of Task Force Asperin, told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Mato said while in jail, he overheard a conversation between two police officers in which Bucayu was supposed to have said that a P2-million reward would be given if Mato signed the affidavit of confession.

"These are all concoctions," Bucayu said.

He said Mato had wanted to turn state witness but he was not qualified because he was the "most guilty" among those charged with Asperin's murder.

"Mato had to do the job because he needed the money," Bucayu said.

### Admission

He said Mato admitted to the crime in an extrajudicial confession he made in the presence of a lawyer from the Public Attorney's Office, his parents and reporters in Koronadal City, South Cotabato, where Mato was arrested on March 16.

Supt. Pedro Obaldo Jr., a task force member and police chief of Bauang, said they had evidence to prove Mato's guilt.

"How could the police torture him when he voluntarily made the confession?" Obaldo asked.

In a statement, Mato's lawyer, Joseph Dimaiyacan, said Mato did not fully understand the contents of the "ready-made" confession that was written in English and was signed without the presence of a lawyer of his choice.

Mato, in his counter-affidavit, also said Libertine Asperin, widow of the election registrar, met him at Camp Crame in the company of members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and told him to maintain his statement tagging the Dumpits as the masterminds.

But Asperin denied Mato's statement, saying it was Mato who asked her to meet him at Camp Crame where he confessed to the killing.

"That was April 12, Holy Wednesday, when Mato told me he was the killer of my husband," she said.

Asperin, an employee of the Commission on Elections in Agoo, said Mato's confession was made in the presence of some CIDG officers and men.

Mato was one of eight people charged with the killing of Asperin before the La Union prosecutor's office in Bauang.

Asperin was gunned down on Jan. 12 while he was about to board his Mitsubishi L-300 van parked near the Bauang town library building where he held office.

Mato said Dominador Rentuma, one of those charged in the murder, asked him in January to join him (Rentuma) in Manila as they had a job to do.

Mato said he accepted the offer because he needed the money for his family.

He said it was only when they reached Agoo, La Union, that Rentuma told him that they would kill an election officer.

Mato said he did not want to be involved in the crime as he was on parole. He said he decided to flee and return to South Cotabato using the P5,000 that Rentuma gave him as advance payment for the job.

*With a report from Errol Abrew, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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  May 20, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
  May 27, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
  June 3, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

B. DIPLOMA PROGRAM IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT
- PRINCIPLES OF LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION MGT.
  May 13, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- MODERN PURCHASING OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT
  May 20, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- TRANSPORTATION AND CARRIER MANAGEMENT
  May 27, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- CUSTOMER SERVICE AND LOGISTICS: CUSTOMER CARE AND TECHNIQUES
  June 3, 2006 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

C. REGULAR PROGRAMS & LEARNING SESSIONS
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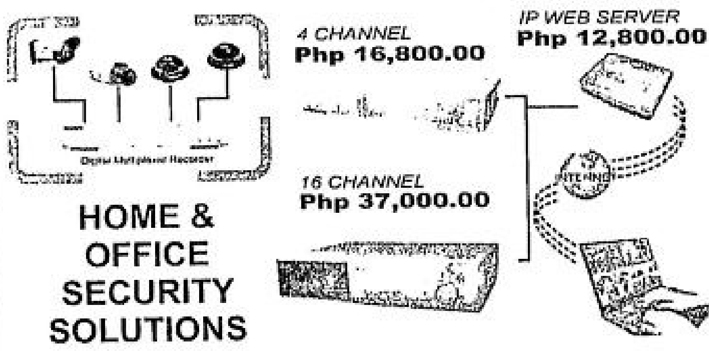

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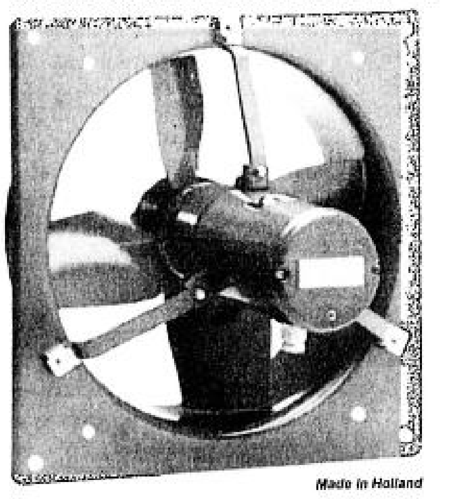

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# Frequent NPA raids alarm security adviser

**By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LUCENA CITY—NATIONAL SECURITY Adviser Norberto Gonzales has expressed alarm over the escalation of raids and ambuscades by the communist New People's Army rebels on government forces.

"The report that I'm getting in my office is not showing good signs. It seems that there are more soldiers and police killed than the NPAs in the past several months," he told reporters here on Friday.

Gonzales was in Camp Nakar, headquarters of the military's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom), as guest speaker in a seminar.

He said more weapons were captured by the NPA guerrillas than by the government troops. "These are very alarming signs," he said.

Solcom chief Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr. said the reports that Gonzales received did not reflect the situation in Southern Luzon.

Cabuay said that in the first quarter, government forces "neutralized" 52 NPA guerrillas in Southern Luzon, with 24 killed, 17 captured and 11 surrendered.

Last year, the figure was 143, Solcom said.

Cabuay admitted that the government suffered six dead and seven wounded in action.

He said the Army recovered 57 firearms from the NPA during the same period.

The NPA was not able to seize even a single arm from the military, he said, but acknowledged that police in the region lost 14 firearms to the rebels.

"We need to increase offensives on the NPA guerrilla fronts," Gonzales urged.

But he also declared that the government was renewing its peace offer to the insurgents.

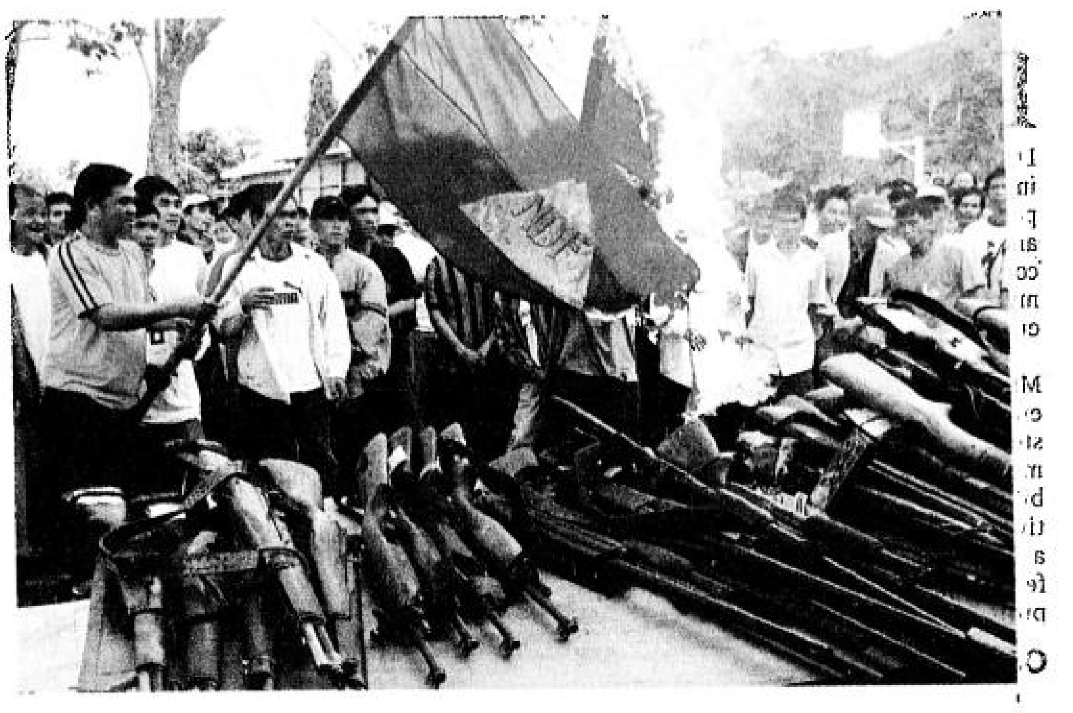
"To those who want peace, we will talk peace. To those who want war, they will face it. The government is open to a cessation of hostilities," he said.

He stressed: "A precondition of the peace talks would be the demobilization of the NPA or at least in the beginning, a declaration of a permanent ceasefire, just like what the government is doing in Mindanao."

He said the offer for the resumption of peace talks had no deadline.

"What we want is a permanent and real ceasefire like the one we have with the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front). We will continue with the peace talks provided the agenda that we want is taken seriously by the other side," he said.

Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal dismissed Gonzales' pronouncement as "loose talk."



**FORMER** New People's Army rebels in Davao del Sur burn the flags of the National Democratic Front and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army to dramatize the end of their association with the rebel movement. AQUILES ZONIO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

# Suspected Red leader nabbed

**By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—POLICE HAVE ARRESTED A suspected rebel leader believed to be among those involved in last year's ambush in Calinog town in Iloilo that resulted in the death of nine soldiers and the wounding of 18 others.

Samuel Lagulao, 53, was arrested on April 10 in his room at the Iloilo Mission Hospital where he has been confined since March 22 for treatment of injuries from a vehicular accident in Zarraga town in Iloilo.

Senior Supt. Isagani Cuevas, deputy regional police director, said Lagulao was arrested by members of the Western Visayas Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division based on a warrant issued by Regional Trial Court Branch 22 Judge Guilljen Delfin-Lim.

He was detained at the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center in Pototan town. The court recommended no bail.

Lagulao is among the 18 suspected members of the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army (CPP-NPA) facing multiple charges of murder with the use of explosive and multiple frustrated murder.

Cuevas said the 18 were among the NPA rebels who attacked government troops on Nov. 19 in Barangay Datagan in Calinog.

The rebels detonated a land mine and fired at the troops, inflicting one of the biggest number of casualties on government forces in recent years. Among the dead were members of the elite First Scout Ranger Battalion.

Cuevas said Lagulao was deputy commander of the NPA on Panay Island in 1985.

A human rights group, Panay Alliance-Karapatan, said that Lagulao, a former political detainee, was now branch manager of the Great Domestic Insurance firm in Roxas City in Capiz.

"It is public knowledge that he has been living and working in Roxas City for a long time now," said the group's secretary general, Samuel Torato.

Torato said Lagulao's arrest was "part of the government's malicious scheme" to link former political detainees and leaders of legal organizations to attacks by the NPA.

He urged the release of Lagulao on humanitarian grounds. Lagulao still wears a brace around the neck and could not get up from bed unassisted due to a fractured backbone.

# Be visible, gov asks local execs

OZAMIZ CITY—THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S lack of good governance and failure to heal the wounds caused by warring families and a long history of political turmoil have been attributed for the serious insurgency problem in one of the towns of Misamis Occidental.

Gov. Loreto Leo Ocampos, fed up by the growing insurgency in the northern town of Sapang Dalaga, issued the statement in reaction to the latest attack by the communist New People's Army (NPA) on a military detachment that killed three soldiers and wounded five others.

About 100 rebels attacked the detachment of the Army's 10th Infantry Battalion and 2nd Company of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit in Upper Buenavista, Sapang Dalaga on April 11. Fighting lasted until daybreak, with the rebels bringing with them assorted firearms.

"Sapang Dalaga is a breeding ground of people with discontent brought about by the absence of good governance for so long, including that of the present administration of Mayor Virginia Animas," Ocampos said.

To solve the problem, there should be governance "that can be seen, felt and touched" by the people, he said. *Romy Macalisang, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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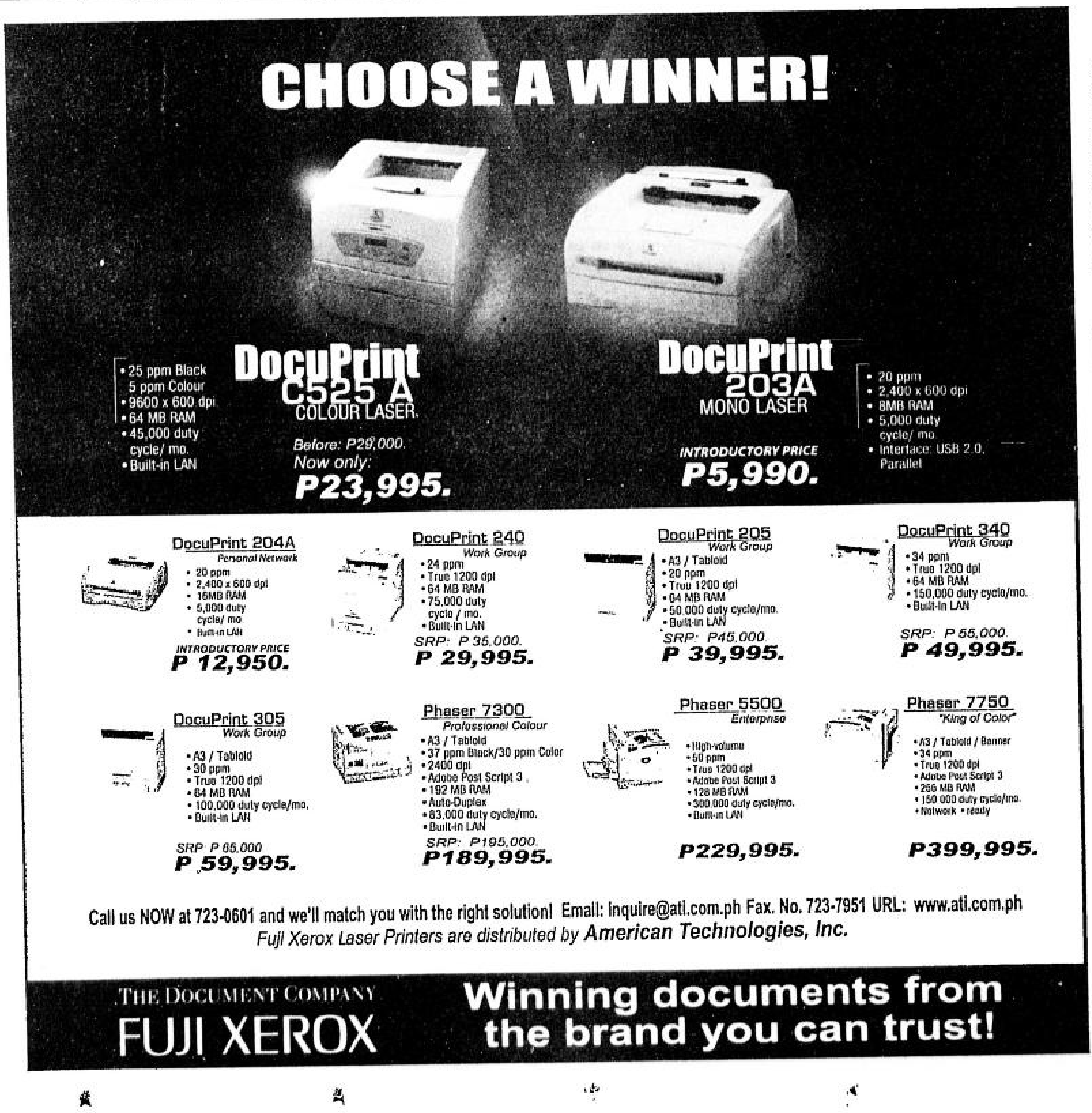

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## ROUNDUP

### Ilocos Sur vice mayor killed by son

SAN JUAN, Ilocos Sur—Vice Mayor Richard Varilla was shot and killed by his son after a heated argument at the family compound in Barangay Immayus Norte here on Friday. Chief Insp. Rene Ligutan, police chief here, said at the height of the argument between Varilla, 50, and his son, Bander, 23, the vice mayor drew his gun and fired warning shots. Reports said the two were arguing over family problems. Ligutan said that when Varilla started firing his gun, Bander went inside their house, got a 9-mm pistol and shot his father. Police said Varilla had six bullet wounds in the back and other parts of the body. Ligutan said Bander, who fled after the incident, called him up on Saturday and expressed willingness to surrender.

*Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### Abandoned logs seized in Mauban

LUCENA CITY—Police and personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources recovered different sizes of logs in Mauban, Quezon on April 18. The logs measuring 23.6 cubic meters valued at about P140,000 were abandoned on a riverbank in Sitio Salamungay, Barangay Balay-balay. The logs were brought to the DENR monitoring base in Calumpang, Tayabas, Quezon for proper disposition.

*Delfin T. Mallari Jr. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### 4 rebels killed in Sorsogon

BULAN, Sorsogon—Four suspected New People's Army members were killed in an encounter with policemen and Army soldiers in Barangay Sigad here on April 9. Police identified one of those killed as Juliet Golimlim, alias Ka Maan, 24, of Barangay San Juan Daan, alleged leader of the rebel group. Two government troopers were wounded but were pronounced out of danger. The rebels left behind five grenades, a Carbine rifle, a .38 cal. revolver, a mobile phone and nine knapsacks containing personal belongings, the police reported. The next day, residents of Sigad and nearby Barangay N. Roque reported finding three dead persons, one of them a woman, all with bullet wounds.

*Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### Icon's head, hands stolen

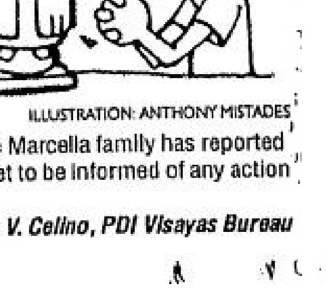

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

ROXAS CITY—The head and two hands of the 150-year-old image of St. Veronica were stolen on Black Saturday while it was on a carriage inside a family compound in Poblacion Ilawod, Dumarao, Capiz. "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing," said Lyddian Marcella of the culprits who stole the head and hands of the image that has been with her family for decades. She said that if the parts were returned, she would not file charges against the culprits. The Marcella family has reported the robbery to the Dumarao police but it had yet to be informed of any action taken, she said.

*Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

# Plan to close Banahaw permanently proposed

LUCENA CITY—WITH THE CHANGES TAKing place in Mt. Banahaw after most of its upper areas have been sealed off to pilgrims and mountaineers for the past two years, concerned groups are thinking of closing the mystical mountain to human intrusion forever.

"That's the general sentiment of most Mt. Banahaw stakeholders—not to lift the entry restriction after five years and instead call for the permanent closure of the mountain for its total protection and rehabilitation," said lawyer Asis Perez, executive director of the Tanggol Kalikasan (TK), a public interest environmental legal defense center and one of Banahaw's avid protectors.

## Opinion

Perez said the general opinion was reached during a "Solidarity Night" held on April 15 at the Barangay Kinabuhayan Elementary School. The program was a tribute to the more than 400 volunteers who helped manage the influx of mountain visitors during Holy Week.

Officials of Dolores town led by Mayor Rolando San Jose and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, environmentalist groups and mountain villages attended the event.

A video documentary prepared by the TK was presented. It showed the return of gushing water from the Kristalino Falls within the off-limits area and multicolored butterflies swarming the place.

Foot trails leading to the summit are no longer recognizable due to the growth of new vegetation and the return of wildlife.

A tent camp on the summit is no longer traceable.

Dolores environment and natural resources officer Manny Calayag said the local government was inclined to support the plan to permanently close most parts of the mountain to people.

"The permanent closure of Mt. Banahaw will be favorable to the local government. We will be able to fully protect our main water sources atop the mountain," he said.

All towns around the mountain source their potable water from Banahaw.

## Closure

Since summer of 2002, the Protected Area Management Board, a multisectoral group tasked by the government with safeguarding the area, has been enforcing a five-year closure of Mounts Banahaw and San Cristobal, where thousands of pilgrims trek during Holy Week.

Many believers climb Banahaw in the hope of experiencing something divine.

Supremo Jose Illustrisimo, leader of religious sect Tatlong Persona Solo Dios based in Kinabuhayan Village that serves as gateway to Banahaw, has admitted to the INQUIRER that he would also support the plan to permanently close the mountain.

"We're not affected by the restriction. There are still lots of accessible sacred sites for all the religious to pray and meditate," he had said.

Calayag recalled that before the closure, at least 600,000 pilgrims and mountaineers usually climbed Banahaw during Holy Week.

"This year we only had around 50,000 mountain visitors. We could barely haul two dump trucks of trash collected by volunteers," he said.

Before the closure order was imposed, tons of garbage and other traces of destructive practices were left by mountaineers and devotees.

Religious pilgrims, especially amulet and souvenir hunters fond of cutting trees or slicing off their bark, had also contributed to the destruction of the mountain ecosystem. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

# Tacloban offers jobs to 200 youths

TACLOBAN CITY—The city government has allocated P800,000 for a program offering summer jobs to over 200 students and out-of-school youth.

City personnel officer Cleofas Añover said beneficiaries, aged 15 to 25 years old, had started working for five days a week. Their employment will end next month.

Añover said the program was the city government's way of helping young people earn this summer and teach them to value work.

## Programs

Close to 500 youths have applied for the jobs under the Work Appreciation Program (WAP) and the Special Program for Employed Students (SPES), but only 220 will be chosen, according to the city personnel officer.

The city government has set aside P500,000 for those who qualify for work under the WAP, or those who are out-of-school youth.

Some P300,000 has been allocated under the SPES for jobseekers whose family annual incomes are less than P36,000.

The money came from the city's general funds.

## Pay

Under the WAP, the youths will work for 20 days and receive P130 daily from the city government.

Those employed under the SPES will work for 30 days and get P175 daily, 40 percent of which will be paid by the Department of Labor and Employment.

Añover said some of the youth would be assigned to the different city offices.

Others will help in the city's cleanliness, environment and beautification programs. *Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Contract | Proposed Construction of 68 Housing Units of Bukidnon Housing Project Phase IV |
| Location | Landing, Casisang, Malaybalay City |
| Contract Reference Number | 300-06-0010 |
| Approved Budget for the Contract | P 9,302,570.32 |
| Contract Duration | 225.00 Calendar Days |

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Advertisement | April 18, 2006 – May 2, 2006 |
| 2. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility Forms | May 9, 2006 until 9.00 A.M. only |
| 3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check | May 10, 2006 |
| 4. Issuance of Bid Documents | May 11, 2006 |
| 5. Pre-bid | May 16, 2006, 10.00 A.M. |
| 6. Receipt and Opening of Bids | May 23, 2006, 10.00 A.M. |

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms upon their submission of LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount at P 200.00 Eligibility Form to the Provincial Treasurer Office. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC Secretariat Office, Capitol, Malaybalay City. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by BAC Secretariat at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the Bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00.

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon assumes no responsibility whasoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved:

(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
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Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – April 21 & 24, 2006)

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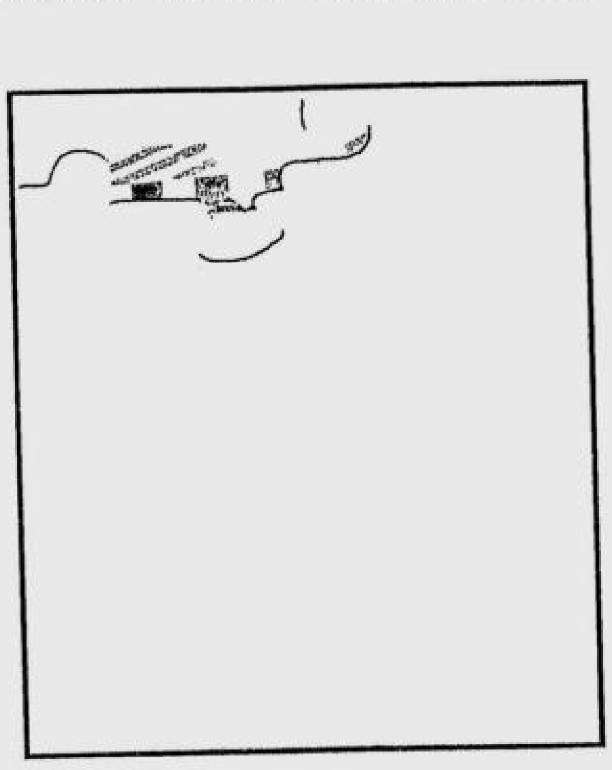

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| 40-43 | 303.80 | 759.50 | 1,519.00 |
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| 48-50 | 463.80 | 1,159.50 | 2,319.00 |
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INSULAR LIFE

# Reinstate 383 PLDT workers, Sto. Tomas urged

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE employees' union at Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) has asked Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas to heed a Supreme Court ruling by ordering the company to reinstate the 383 employees whom she excluded in her return-to-work order following a strike in December 2002.

The Manggagawa ng Komunikasyon ng Pilipinas (MKP) made the appeal after the National Labor Relations Commission tossed back to Sto. Tomas on March 24 the motion for execution that the union filed at her office on Jan. 17.

The MKP pushed for the readmission of the 383 employees, most of whom were women, since the Supreme Court denied on Dec. 14, 2005 the motion for reconsideration filed by the PLDT.

In its July 2005 decision, the tribunal's second division affirmed the resolution of the Court of Appeals to nullify Sto. Tomas' order issued on Jan. 2, 2003.

The High Court pointed out that the phrases "all striking or locked-out employees" and "readmit all workers" in Article 263(g) of the Labor Code "do not distinguish or qualify, and emphatically is a catch-all embracing enumeration of who should be returned to work."

Sto. Tomas exempted the 383 employees, who were retrenched due to alleged redundancy while the strike was ongoing.

They belonged to the PLDT's operations service and traffic operations center in the cities of Malolos, Tarlac, Batangas, Calamba, Davao, Iloilo, Lucena and Metro Manila. Those offices were either closed or downsized.

The Supreme Court emphasized their situation. "Records would show that the strike occurred on Dec. 23, 2002. Article 263(g) directs that the employer must readmit all workers under the same terms and conditions prevailing before the strike. Since the strike was held on the aforementioned date, then the condition prevailing before it, which was the condition present on Dec. 22, 2002, must be maintained," it said.

"Undoubtedly, on Dec. 22, 2002, [they who] were dismissed due to alleged redundancy were still employed by the petitioner and holding their respective positions. This is the status quo that must be maintained."

The NLRC said it "cannot take action" on the motion for execution and returned the records of the case to the DOLE.

Gemma Doble, spokesperson for the displaced workers, said Sto. Tomas should stop dilly-dallying.

"It is clear in the decision of NLRC that the only person who can decide on the reinstatement of the terminated employees is Secretary Sto. Tomas. She was the one who prevented us from returning to work. There is no higher authority than the secretary to act on the matter, considering that she also heads the NLRC," Doble told the INQUIRER here on Tuesday. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

# Auxiliary bishop of Cotabato named

COTABATO CITY—A local priest will become the second diocesan prelate of Cotabato in an Episcopal ordination ceremony set to fill the Immaculate Conception Cathedral here with Catholics and other religious well-wishers on Tuesday.

"Security will be tight to ensure that no untoward incident will happen," said Mayor Muslimin Sema after learning that priests, nuns, lay leaders, and members of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and other guests are coming for the installation of Fr. Jose Colin Bagaforo as auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Cotabato.

Traffic will be rerouted to allow free flow of vehicles leading to the ordination site, police said.

Cotabato Archbishop and former CBCP president Orlando Quevedo said he would be assisted by incumbent CBCP head Angel Lagdameo and past CBCP president Fernando Capalla in the 9:30 a.m. ceremony.

Born Jan. 30, 1954, Bagaforo entered the seminary in 1970 and earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at the Notre Dame University here in 1975.

## Theological studies

He obtained higher theological studies at the St. Francis Xavier Seminary in Davao City. He took up a masteral degree major in religious education at the Ateneo de Davao University and another major course in educational management planning at the Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City.

Bagaforo's ecclesiastical elevation on April 25 will mark his 26th year of priesthood. He was ordained into the Diocesan Clergy of Cotabato on March 25, 1980, making him the second bishop in the congregation. The first was Monsignor Romulo de la Cruz, bishop of Antique.

Bagaforo will serve as assistant to Quevedo in the Cotabato archdiocese, covering North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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UNDP

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### Contracting of Consulting Services for the Small Grants Programme for the Operations to Promote Tropical Forests in Southeast Asia

**The Development Support Services Center (DSSC) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites local consultants to apply for eligibility and to bid for the subcontract on Technical Support Services for Knowledge Management Support Program of the project "Small Grants Programme for the Operations to Promote Tropical Forests in Southeast Asia".**

The "Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests" (SGP PTF) is a regional initiative fully funded by the European Commission (EC), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA). The SGP PTF works closely with and builds upon the existing mechanisms and procedures established by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP). SGP PTF will run until December 2007 and is currently being implemented in eight (8) countries, namely : Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Cambodia.

The project requires the services of a consultant to provide assistance in the preparation and implementation of a knowledge management support program for strengthening current initiatives on knowledge management in the eight (8) participating countries in the project.

For interested parties, Bid Documents (Eligibility Requirements, Instructions to Bidders and Terms of Reference) may be secured personally, upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **PhP 1,000.00 for each document** from the following address :

**Development Support Services Center
United Nations Development Programme
30th Floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City
Tel. No. 632 901 0273 / 901 0271
Fax No. 632 901 0200 / 889 7177**

The abovementioned Bid Documents will be released to all interested participants starting **25 April 2006 to 2 May 2006 only**. The Bid Documents shall contain all instructions on the rules, procedures, dates and other schedules for the pre-bid conference and opening of bid envelopes, as well as further details on the scope of services required.

UNDP reserves the right to reject any or all the bids, waive any defect or informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the most advantageous offer to the UNDP, for and in behalf of the project. UNDP assumes no responsibility to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ETHELIND B. CAPUNO**
**Manager, DSSC**

(PDI - April 24, 2006)

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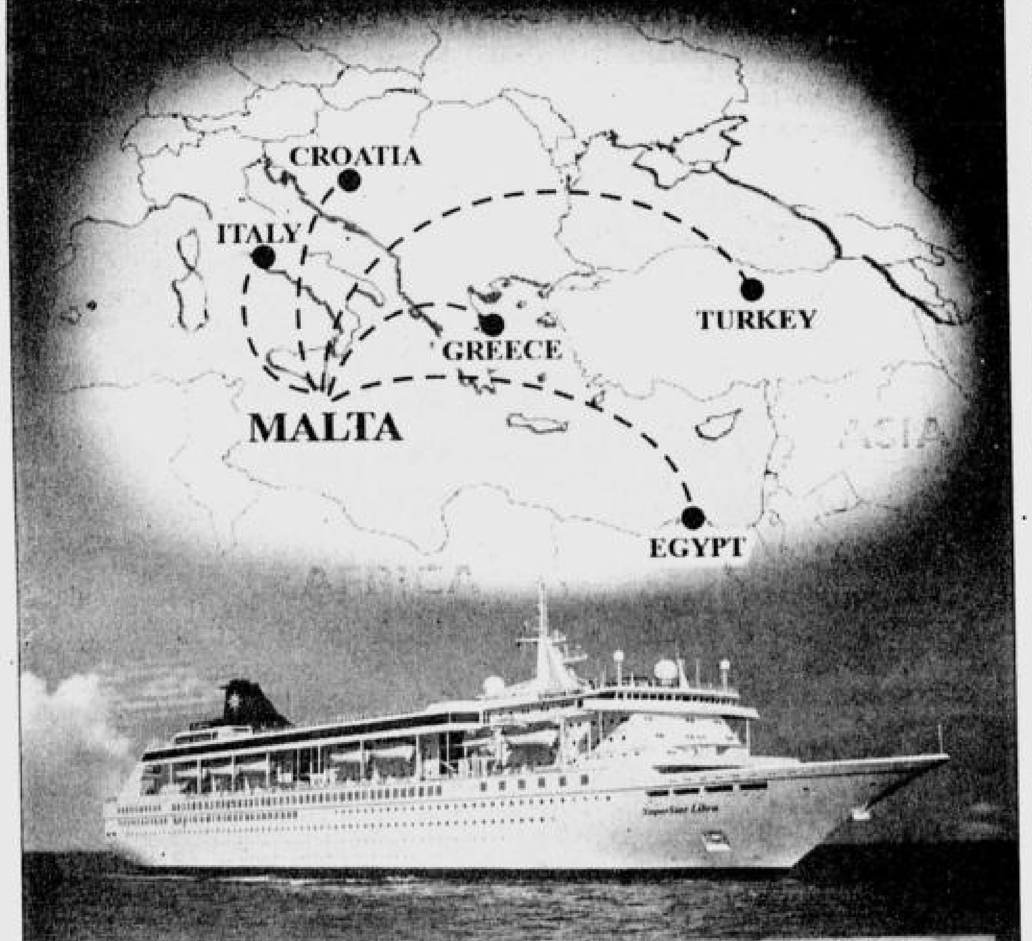

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| SAILING DATES | RATES | ITINERARIES |
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| SAILING DATES | RATES | ITINERARIES |
|---|---|---|
| 23 September 2006<br>7N Malta & the Aegean I | FROM USD 1529<br>on Inside Stateroom, DB (Deck 3) | Istanbul, Turkey – Izmir, Turkey – Valletta, Malta – Athens (Piraeus), Greece – Istanbul, Turkey |

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**PHILIPPINE POSTAL CORPORATION**
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## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Postal Corporation, through its Special Bids and Awards Committee for MPO-IPS Project, invites e-Business Solution providers, specifically those involve in the supply of computer hardware and software infrastructure of the International Postal System (IPS), to apply for eligibility and to bid for the different category of the hereunder project:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project Name** | Modernization of the Processing at the Mail Processing Office, CMEC, PPC (MPO-IPS Installation Project) |
| **Identification Index No.** | QSFPHL0403LTI01 |
| **Procurement Description** | Procurement of computer hardware and software infrastructure of the Int'l Postal System (IPS) |

| SOURCE OF FUND | CATEGORY | PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENT | APPROVED BUDGET (In US Dollar) | CONTRACT PERIOD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality Service Fund of the Universal Postal Union | 1. Computer HW and SW | Supply of computer hardware & software, printer including installation (electrical wiring and cabling) | 50,543.37 | Forty-Five (45) days |
| | 2. Laser scanner, printer and its consumables | Supply of barcode scanner, barcode printer and its accessories | 15,448.29 | |
| | 3. Digital weighing scale to be interfaced w/ computer | Supply of digital weighing scale w/ RJ-232 Interface | 4,800.00 | |
| | 4. Computer tables and AC | Supply of furniture/Fixture | 2,106.59 | |
| | | TOTAL | 72,898.25 | |

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking similar projects within at least five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding The eligibility check as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the pass/fail criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Check and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification, Award of Contract and, Performance Security shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

| ACTIVITIES | SCHEDULE | |
|---|---|---|
| | Date | Time |
| 1. Issuance of Eligibility Requirement & Bid Documents | April 26, 2006 | 9 AM-4 PM |
| 2. Deadline of Submission of Application for Eligibility and to Bid | May 18, 2006 | 4 PM |
| 3. Pre-Bid Conference | May 23, 2006 | 1 PM |
| 4. Deadline for the Submission of Bid Proposal | June 07, 2006 | 9 AM |
| 5. Opening of Bid | June 07, 2006 | 10 AM |
| 6. Post-qualification | Within 7 days after opening of bids | |
| 7. Notice of Award | Within 14 days after post-qualification | |

**Accreditation Fee is P400.00; Eligibility Fee is P600.00, Bid Document Fees are a.)** P4,000.00 for computer HW & SW b.) P1,500.00 for scanner/printer c.) P500.00 for digital-weighing scale d.) P200.00 for furniture/fixture respectively.

The Philpost reserves the right or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability from the affected bidder(s).

**For information and details, please call:**

**The Secretariat**
UPU-QSF – Special Bids and Awards Committee
Philippine Postal Corporation
G/F Mezzanine, Manila CPO Bldg
Liwasang Bonifacio, 1000 Manila
Tel. No. (632) 527-3824 (632) 527-0140

**APPROVED:**

LUIS D. CARLOS
Chairman
Special BAC for UPU-QSF
MPO-IPS Projects

(PDI–April 24 & May 1, 2006)

---

**PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY**
7TH Floor Legaspi Towers 200, 107 Paseo de Roxas St., 1226 City of Makati
Tel. Nos. (02) 817-4711•(02)817-4712•(02)817-4713
Facsimile Nos. (02) 815-2660•(02) 813-1441/46

## INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS

The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)**, after two (2) failed biddings, is inviting interested parties to submit proposals for the negotiated sale and/or lease of the following properties on a serviced land basis (major roads and tapping points for utilities are available), located at the Central Business Park 1 A, Bay City (formerly known as Boulevard 2000), Pasay City, for mixed use or commercial development purposes.

| BLK | LOT | | AREA* (m²) | MODE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A1 | 1 | corner | 3,843 | SALE |
| A2 | 1 | corner | 3,462 | SALE |
| A2 | 2 | interior | 2,568 | SALE |
| A2 | 3 | interior | 2,611 | SALE |
| A2 | 4 | interior | 2,573 | SALE |
| A2 | 5 | corner | 3,321 | SALE |
| A3 | 1 | corner | 2,500 | SALE |
| A3 | 2 | interior | 2,222 | SALE |
| B4 | | portion | 5,825 | SALE OR LEASE |
| B7 | | portion | 4,648 | SALE OR LEASE |
| B5 | | portion | 18,348 | SALE OR LEASE |

* Subject to final survey

1. Sealed and properly labeled Prequalification and Proposal Envelopes may be submitted starting **27 April until 26 May 2006** and must be addressed to:

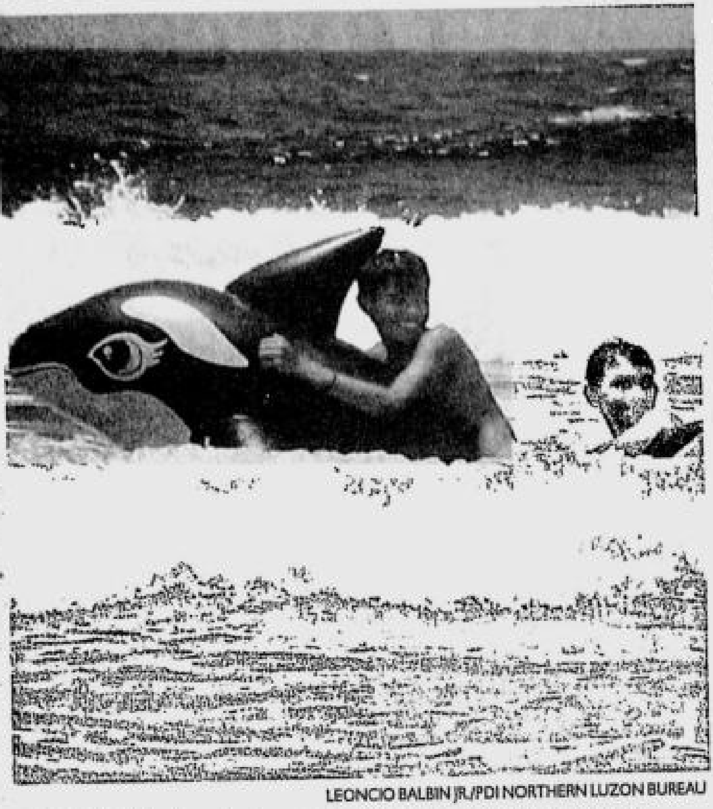
   OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER/CEO
   PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY
   Subject: NEGOTIATED SALE AND/OR LEASE
   CBP 1 A PROPERTIES

   a. **Prequalification Envelope**, sealed and labeled must contain the following **legal documents:**
      1) Individuals: birth certificate duly authenticated by the local civil registrar or NSO or certificate of naturalization or passport to prove the Philippine citizenship and that he is at least 21 years of age (for sale and lease)
      2) Government corporations (including LGU)/government financial institutions: certified true copy of the charter creating the corporation or other incorporation papers from the SEC and other documents to prove that it is a government owned or controlled corporation (for sale and lease)
      3) Partnership/corporation/association: DTI/SEC registration and certification that the partnership/corporation/ association is at least 60% owned by citizens of the Philippines and organized and registered under Philippine Laws. (for lease only).
      4) 2005 Income tax returns or 2005 certificate of compensation payment/tax withheld in cases of employees 2005 business tax returns and tax clearance dated May 2006 issued by the BIR must be submitted to prove the full and timely payment of taxes, per Executive Order No 398 (for sale and lease).

   b. **Proposal envelope/s** for each property, sealed and properly labeled as to the block/lot number of the property and the proposed mode of acquisition (i.e., cash sale, lease) and must include the corresponding **tender deposit/s** in the form of a cashier's or manager's check payable to PEA and drawn from any universal bank. •Sale offer: at least 10% of total offer •Lease offer: equivalent to at least three (3) months lease for the property Interested parties may submit proposals for several properties
2. After evaluation and ranking of offers, only the offerors of the highest and best bid clusters shall be invited for negotiation
3. Copies of the Technical Information and Development Guidelines may be obtained from the Marketing Department, 7TH Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati MM from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM starting 24 April until 26 May 2006 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check payable to PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY
4. Material misrepresentation and/or breach of warranty made in the Prequalification Documents and Proposal shall cause the forfeiture of the tender deposit in favor of the PRA. The forfeiture of the Tender Deposit shall not bar the PRA from pursuing all other remedies available under the TOR and applicable laws
5. PRA reserves the right to reject any proposal or waive any defects or formality, impose additional terms and conditions and accept the proposal most advantageous to the Government.
6. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address and at telephone numbers 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7104 (direct line)

(Sgd.) SILVESTRE H. BELLO III
General Manager/CEO

(PDI-- April 22, 24 & 26, 2006)



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**CHILDREN** enjoy playing and swimming at the Darapidap beach, Candon City, Ilocos Sur.

### CAGER'S DEATH

# Closure of Cagayan resort sought

**By Melvin Gascon**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

SOLANA, CAGAYAN—POLICE have recommended the temporary closure of a resort in Barangay Maddarulug here where a 21-year-old varsity player of the University of Santo Tomas was electrocuted on Black Saturday.

Town police chief Supt. Crispulo Casilana said he had recommended to Mayor Rodrigo de Asis the closure of Cortes Farm and Resort after they found several defects in the establishment's electrical wiring system.

The resort, located on the hills of Maddarulug near the banks of the Cagayan River, is owned by Dr. Armando Cortes, former president of the Cagayan State University, and his wife Erlinda.

It used to be a poultry farm, resort workers said.

Casilana ordered a team of electrical engineers to look into the resort's wiring system following the death of John Lee Apil.

Apil was electrocuted after he held on to an electrically charged light post near the resort's pool at about 8 p.m. on April 15.

Witnesses' accounts said Apil rushed to the aid of Ivan de Asis, 13, and Howell Alamo, 21, when they were thrown to the ground after they were jolted by an electric charge on the wet spots of the poolside.

"The resort needs to be closed until the noted defects are corrected. We do not want the incident to happen again to anyone," Casilana said.

He said the resort owners could be held liable for gross negligence for allegedly failing to check on the safety of the electrical installations within the resort.

The INQUIRER sought Cortes for comment on Saturday but he gave this correspondent the runaround.

Christian Cortes, the owner's nephew and the resort's acting supervisor, said his uncle left instructions for this correspondent to meet him in a hotel in Tuguegarao City.

But Cortes was not in the hotel when this correspondent arrived. His son, Armando Jr., declined to give his mobile phone number to this correspondent.

Mayor De Asis could also not be reached for comment. He was on a trip to China, according to his daughter, Jaka.

On Saturday, the resort was still open, although it had no customers.

Apil was the only child of Charlie and Ines Apil.

He was a fourth year commerce student at UST, and was supposed to graduate in October.

His parents said Apil was looking forward to play in the Philippine Basketball League after his graduation.

"John Lee would not have died if only there was an employee who watched over the swimmers," said Dr. Sofia de Asis, who was then with the victim's group of 14 people. The resort staff, she said, did not know how to react in times of emergency. *With a report from Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

# Respect peace zones, group asks NPA, AFP

INFANTA, QUEZON—A CHURCH-based group has called on communist rebels and government soldiers to observe "peace zones" in northern Quezon so that rehabilitation of calamity-stricken areas can continue.

Fr. Pete Montallana, coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples' Apostolate in the Prelature of Infanta and director of the Tribal Center for Development, said the faithful observance of the peace zones by both parties would serve as "eternal relief offerings" to the calamity victims.

Montallana lamented how rehabilitation efforts in Agta communities had been hampered by nonstop fighting between the New People's Army and the Armed Forces.

Anxiety and fear have gripped the indigenous peoples and volunteer relief workers whenever fighting erupted in the area, he said.

"The fighting has to stop and let peace prevail for the sake of the calamity victims," Montallana said.

The priest said the local folk had long suffered and yet collective efforts to bring their life back to normal were hounded by clashes.

In 2004, Quezon Rep. Rafael Nantes led a multisectoral initiative that declared northern Quezon a peace zone and thus, free from armed hostilities.

A lull in the fighting ensued in the early months after the peace zone was declared, but clashes have resumed, affecting mostly the Agta natives.

"We're not taking sides. Our appeal is for the two combatants to wage their battles outside the area, particularly away from the tribal communities," Montallana said.

Aside from the Bondoc Peninsula, the Polillo-Real-Infanta-General Nakar area in northern Quezon is considered a hotbed of communist insurgency. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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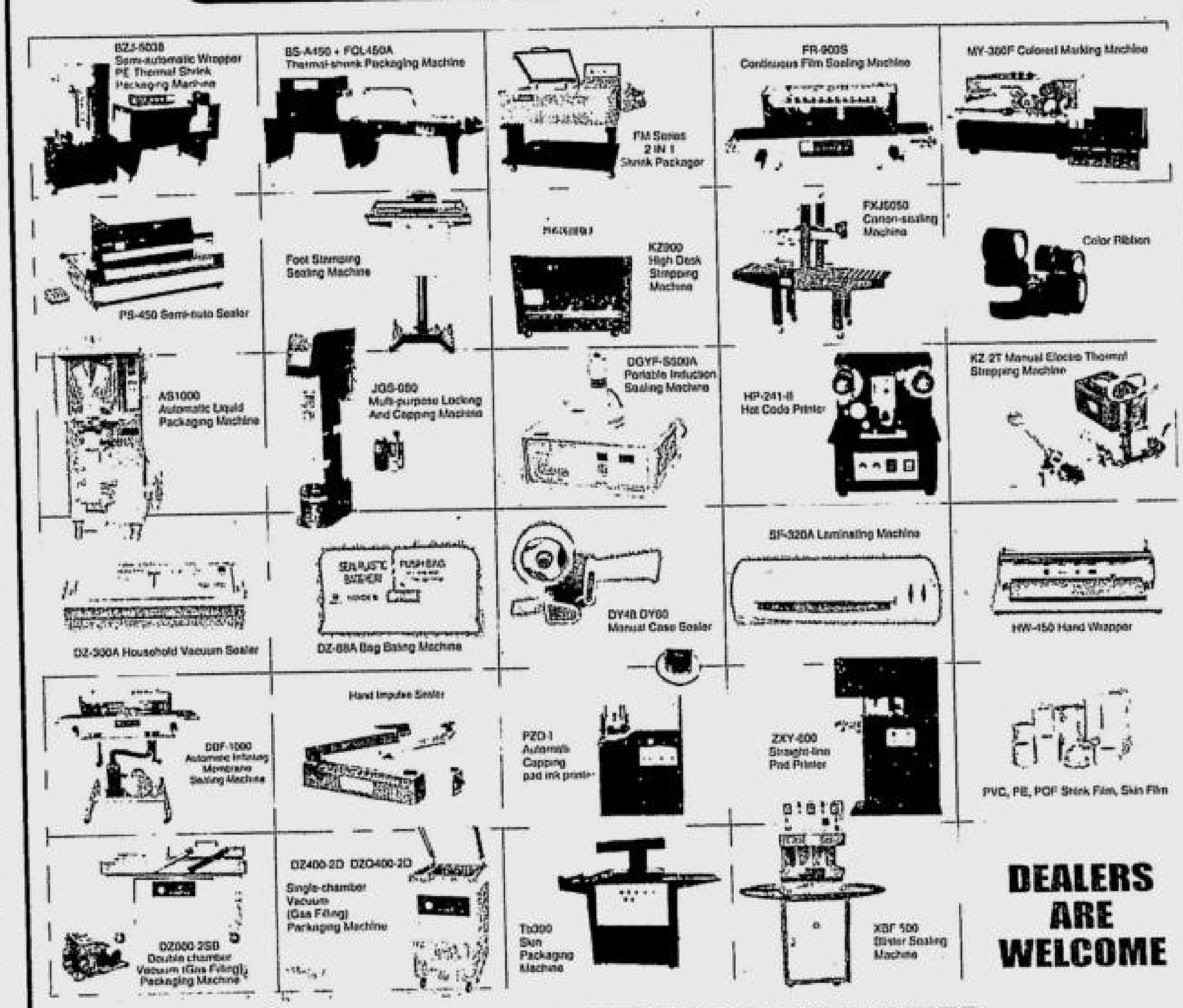
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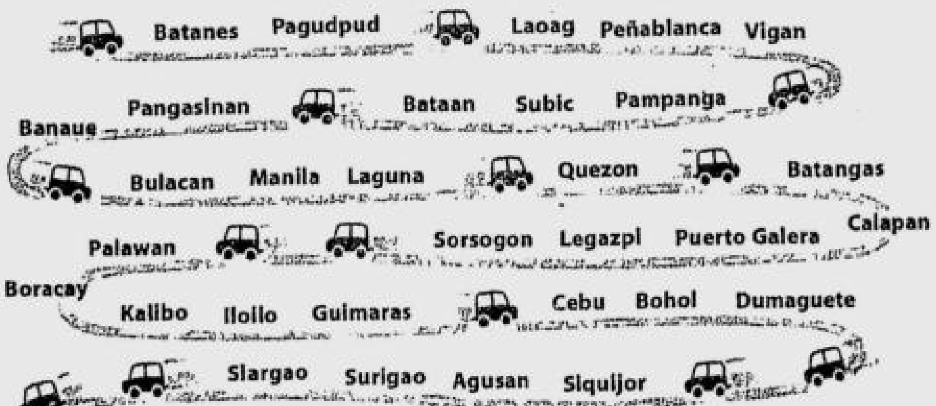
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The **PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD PROGRAM** was created through Executive Order 448 by then **PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS** and institutionalized through **REPUBLIC ACT 9013**, otherwise known as **THE PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD ACT**, signed by **PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL - ARROYO** on February 28, 2001.

The recipients of the PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARD RECOGNITIONS pass through a stringent assessment process based on the seven-point criteria of the PQA, patterned after the BALDRIGE NATIONAL QUALITY AWARD of the United States of America. Assessment includes desk evaluation and consensus review by trained and highly qualified PQA assessors; site visit on applicant organizations and final review of a panel of judges. Organizations approved by the Board of Judges to receive PQA Recognitions are endorsed and approved by the President of the Philippines before they are officially announced as PQA recipients to the public.

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4. FIRST SUMIDEN CIRCUITS, INC. (2004)
5. PSi TECHNOLOGIES, INC. (2002)
6. PHILIPS SEMICONDUCTORS PHILS. (2000)
7. TEXAS INSTRUMENTS, INC. (2000)
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9. CITY GOVERNMENT OF MARIKINA (1999)
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4. INDO PHIL GROUP OF COMPANIES (2003)
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6. CYPRESS SEMICONDUCTOR PHILS., INC. (2001)
7. ASTEC POWER, INC. (2000)
8. CITY GOVERNMENT OF MAKATI (2000)
9. PSi TECHNOLOGIES, INC. (2000, 1999)
10. NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE (1999)
11. AMERICAN MICROSYSTEMS, INC. - PHILS. (1998)
12. ELECTRONIC ASSEMBLIES, INC. (1998)
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dti
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

# Senate ready to use power against gov't execs

From page A1

source persons, will have the authority to determine whether executive privilege is properly invoked or not," he said. "When a standoff occurs and it happens in the Senate jurisdiction, a contempt citation as a legislative power is always an option."

Section 18 of the Rules of the Senate provides that:

"The committee, by a vote of a majority of its members, may punish for contempt any witness before it who disobeys any order of the committee or refuses to be sworn or to testify or to answer a proper question by the committee or any of its members, or testifying, testifies falsely or evasively …

"Such witness may be ordered by the committee to be detained in such place as it may designate under the custody of the sergeant-at-arms until he agrees to produce the required documents, or to be sworn or to testify, or otherwise purge himself of that contempt."

The contempt power is in line with Section 21 of the Constitution, which grants "the Senate or the House or any of its committees to conduct inquiries in aid of legislation in accordance with its duly published rules of procedures."

It is this right to hold inquiries in aid of legislation which the high court upheld in striking down parts of EO 464.

## Gonzales contempt case

On Sept. 21, 2005, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales was cited for contempt for his refusal to answer questions during a Senate inquiry on the controversial P50-million government lobbying contract awarded to an American group, Venable LLP.

Gonzales was ordered detained and spent weeks at the Philippine Heart Center after he fell ill during the investigation of the Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo.

Senate committees also have the power to order the arrest of officials and individuals who repeatedly ignore invitations to their hearings.

"There are no Senate rogue probes. There are only rogue executive officials refusing to answer questions to cover up for anomalies committed by rogues in Malacañang and the executive department," Lacson said in response to Bunye's tirade against the Senate.

Pangilinan denounced Malacañang for muddling the issue.

"First, it must be stressed that it was Malacañang and not the Senate that was found by the Court to have abused its power. Hence, the attempts by the President's men at painting the Senate as the bad guy is pure and simple squid tactics," Pangilinan said.

"The sooner Malacañang acknowledges that there are constitutional limits to what it can do, the sooner we will see a better governed nation," he added.

## Priority to pending bills

Malacañang yesterday said the Senate should give priority to passing legislation instead of reviving inquiries, pointing out that only 10 session days remain before Congress adjourns sine die on June 9.

"Such very limited and precious time can be put to much better use by giving priority to pending bills needed and awaited by our people," said Gabriel Claudio, the President's political adviser.

Claudio cited the 2006 budget, the antiterror bill, the ethanol bill, electoral reforms, rationalization of fiscal incentives, creation of the credit information bureau, Central Bank Charter amendments and reduction of income tax for low-wage earners.

"For the sake of the country, these are gut legislative issues behind which the executive branch will only be too happy and willing to give its full support and cooperation," he said.

# GMA, Senate brace for fresh showdowns

From page A1

fying in inquiries "in aid of legislation" or those in connection with the "question hour." It points out that the aim of inquiries in aid of legislation "is to elicit information that may be used for legislation," while the objective of inquiries conducted during the question hour, "is to obtain information in pursuit of Congress' oversight function."

The court held that when Congress merely seeks to be informed on how department heads are implementing statutes which it has issued, its right to such information is not as imperative as that for the President to whom, as Chief Executive, such department heads must give a report of their performance as a matter of duty.

## Delicate balancing act

In such a case, Congress "may only request their appearance." However, "when the inquiry in which Congress requires their appearance is 'in aid of legislation' … the appearance is mandatory."

While the court tried to strike a delicate balance on the issue of separation powers, it made clear the point of testifying in aid of legislation, and this was enough to put the senators, who filed the lead petition for declaring EO 464 unconstitutional, in a triumphal mood.

They considered the decision a shattering blow to the executive department in its running battle with the Senate that has now run into a protracted political stalemate.

Flushed by the decision, Senate President Franklin Drilon lost no time in serving notice that he would revive the stalled inquiry into the allegedly overpriced $503-million NorthRail project assisted by the Chinese government.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense, was itching to issue subpoenas to military officials who were barred from appearing by EO 464, to testify on the involvement of the military in the alleged cheating in the 2004 election, as revealed by the so-called Garcillano tapes.

## New showdowns

With the senators on the war path after they were emboldened by the decision, their mood foreshadows new showdowns between the Senate and the President on several issues.

From this perspective, the decision untangled only one issue (about EO 464) of gridlock between the Senate and the President.

Other issues involving challenges to the exercise of executive power and its abuses are likely to reach the court sooner than later—and these include issues associated with the "people's initiative" campaign to revise the Constitution.

Still to be resolved is the issuance of Proclamation No. 1017 declaring a state of national emergency in March.

Now revoked, the proclamation involves the higher contentious issues over what has been charged as the tendency of the administration to exercise arbitrary and authoritarian powers to beat off moves to overthrow the regime through extraconstitutional means (such as coup attempts and "people power" demonstrations).

## Transcendental issue

The Supreme Court emphasized that the transcendental issue raised by EO 464 was the "right of the people to information."

The decision said: "EO 464 is concerned only with the demands of Congress for the appearance of executive officials in the hearings conducted by it, and not with the demands of citizens for information pursuant to their right to information on matters of public concern. … what is involved in the present controversy is not merely the legislative power of inquiry, but the right of people to information."

There are "clear distinctions between the right of Congress to information which underlies the power of inquiry and the right of the people to information on matters of public concern."

## People's right to know

It continued: "To the extent that investigations in aid of legislation are generally conducted in public, however, any executive issuance tending to unduly limit disclosures of information in such investigations necessarily deprives the people of information which, being presumed to be in aid legislation, is presumed to be a matter of public concern …

"The impairment of the right of the people to information as a consequence of EO 464 is, therefore, … just as direct as its violation of the legislative power of inquiry."

It said: "Resort to any means … by which officials of the executive branch could refuse to divulge information cannot be presumed valid. Otherwise, we shall not have merely nullified the power of our legislature to inquire into operations of government, but we shall have given up something of much greater value—our right as a people to take part in government."

The Supreme Court put much emphasis on the right of the people to information, but from the point of view of formation of public opinion, did not deal with the issue of the quality of information that flows from legislative inquiries.

But that issue is not a legal question. It has to be addressed in another perspective.

# High gas prices spur US investments in biofuels

From page A1

ways been a Midwestern fuel, and one of limited environmental benefit because it is made from corn, which requires considerable resources to grow and harvest.

## Ethanol from willow trees

Now, New York is investing millions of dollars in research on corn-free ethanol. The State University of New York (SUNY) is spearheading that effort, which would produce ethanol using chips from willow trees instead.

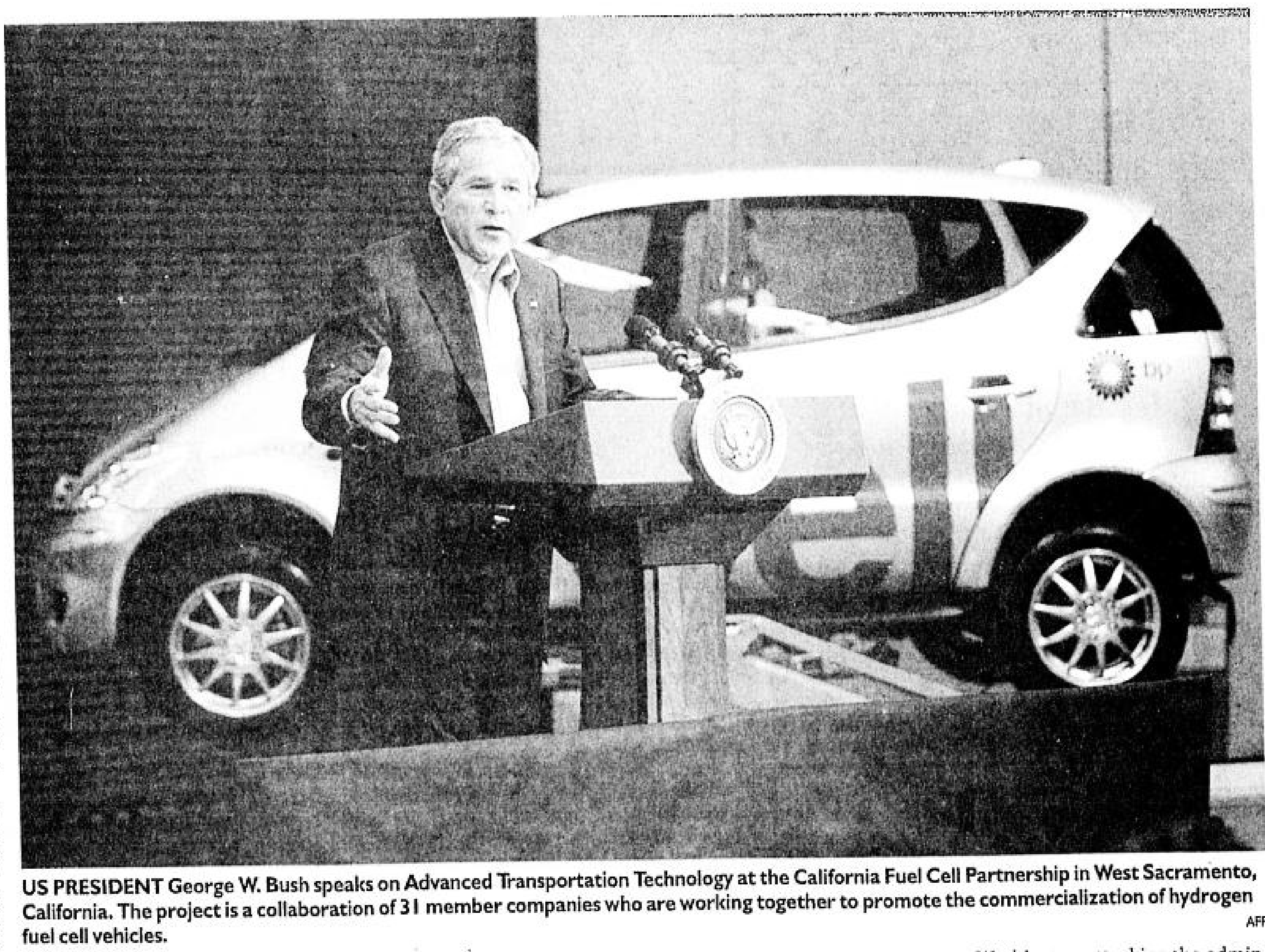
"We pull out the things that are normally thrown away by a pulp and paper mill," said Neil Murphy, the president of the SUNY's College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse, which is also working with an International Paper plant in Ticonderoga, NY.

Essentially, the goal is to use the willow chips to make paper in Ticonderoga and then ship a syrupy byproduct to Fulton, where it can be brewed into ethanol, also known as grain alcohol.

Not that the process is ready for prime time. Mass production using this approach is largely untested.

So the owners of the Fulton plant, a fledgling local company called Northeast Biofuels, hope to start by producing corn-based ethanol at the beginning of 2008, and plan to later experiment with ethanol from wood chips.

They formed a partnership with an established Canadian ethanol producer, Permolex, and even received a $3-million loan from the pension funds of two union locals in the Syracuse region who see jobs in the reconstruction of the brewery.



**US PRESIDENT** George W. Bush speaks on Advanced Transportation Technology at the California Fuel Cell Partnership in West Sacramento, California. The project is a collaboration of 31 member companies who are working together to promote the commercialization of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. AFP

## Hydrogen-powered cars

Amid the record-high gas prices, President W. Bush spent Earth Day on Saturday in West Sacramento promoting his support for hydrogen-powered fuel cell cars.

But Democrats said the vehicles were years away from reality and that the President needed to do more to relieve sticker shock at the pump.

As Bush, on the second day of a four-day trip to California, toured the California Fuel Cell Partnership, a consortium of 31 car makers, energy companies and government agencies, Democrats fired off press releases from Washington attacking the administration's energy plans.

"This nation does not have to choose between a strong economy and a clean environment," Bush said in remarks at Fuel Cell Partnership, where he was flanked by two boxy-looking prototype hydrogen cars. "We can have both at the same time."

Cars powered by fuel cells combine hydrogen and oxygen from the air in a chemical reaction.

## Experimental Honda FCX

Bush said there were about 100 hydrogen cars on California roads, but as of late last year, only one was being tested by consumers, the Spallino family of Redondo Beach, California, who had an experimental Honda FCX worth about $1 million.

"I strongly believe hydrogen is the fuel of the future," Bush said, adding that he thought that today's children would take their driving tests in hydrogen-powered cars.

Bush's remarks came as part of an effort to appear proactive on the politically sensitive issue of high gas prices, an issue that Democrats are increasingly using against the Republicans in the midterm election year.

Although Bush declared in his State of the Union Address that "America is addicted to oil" and then presented a series of alternative energy proposals, Democrats have said the plans are not adequate. Bush, they say, should address consumption more aggressively and not oppose higher fuel-efficiency standards for cars.

In a Democratic response to Bush, Sen. Bill Nelson of Florida said the president needed to take "more dramatic steps," including conservation and raising the mileage standard for all passenger vehicles to at least 40 miles per gallon. *New York Times News Service*

# Ceramic reefs boost growth of El Nido's sea rainforests

From page A1

the settlement of corals and other invertebrates.

They are white ceramic modules shaped like a stag horn coral about the size of small coffee tables. Anchored on reef rubbles, these structures attract fishes and tiny polyps, the creatures that actually create coral reefs.

## Home to 197 fish species

El Nido is only the second place in the world where Seacology has installed the EcoReefs. The first was in Bunaken National Marine Park in Indonesia.

"In the last 400 years, the majority of the world's plant and animal extinctions have taken place on islands," Seacology executive director Duane Silverstein said in a statement.

El Nido is home to 197 colorful and economically significant species of fish that thrive among its 100 species of corals, but blast fishing has decimated the corals and driven away marine life.

The threat to the marine ecosystem around the island has alarmed both local and international agencies as 70 percent of El Nido's population depends on the coast for food and livelihood.

Seacology through the El Nido Foundation committed 630 EcoReef modules to facilitate reef restoration on the island. The next 530 modules will be mounted this May in an area covering 1,300 square meters.

## No zones

Ten El Nido villages are also establishing no-take zones totaling approximately 2,000 acres to allow real reefs to grow on the artificial structures.

The World Wildlife Foundation-Philippines, which was involved in the planning, preparation and installation of the modules, is monitoring and evaluating the rehabilitation.

"The impact of the project will take about three years to evaluate, but the overwhelming support from all stakeholders hints that this may get a successful turnout," RJ de la Calzada, WWF head of the El Nido Marine Environmental Protection Project, said.

The WWF will check after a few months if the structures were still intact and if the coral transplantation had increased the fish presence in the area.

In Indonesia, where the EcoReefs were first installed, the ceramic structures attracted large populations of fish within a few months. Fishes apparently used the branching arms of the structures for shelter.

EcoReefs are designed to break and collapse when the real corals grow stronger and take over the structure. Unlike sunken ships or tires, which are also used to rehabilitate crippled corals, EcoReefs do not leach toxins.

## Critical condition

El Nido is speckled with 45 limestone islands that host 16 species of birds, four of the seven known species of sea turtles in the world, as well as the endangered dugong.

"We are expecting tougher patrolling efforts from the AFP, PNP, PAO and even fisherfolk so we can effectively measure the effect of the project without disturbances," De la Calzada said.

About 95 percent of all coral reefs in the Philippines are in critical condition while only 5 percent are in excellent condition.

Put together, the world's coral reefs cover an area only half the size of France, and they are so endangered that 70 percent of them will cease to be viable within 50 years, according to a Seacology report.

# GMA to visit Saudi next month for talks on oil

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WILL visit Saudi Arabia next month for talks on oil and other economic links, a Philippine Embassy official in Riyadh said Saturday.

The visit will take place in early May and last around four days, but the exact date and details of the trip have yet to be finalized, said the official who requested anonymity.

Ms Arroyo had been due to visit the oil-rich kingdom, where nearly a million Filipinos live and work, last September, but the trip did not materialize.

Her chief aide said at the time she would be inquiring whether the Philippines and other smaller economies could get "affordable" oil prices.

The embassy official said he was not aware if the President would seek any special oil deals, at a time crude prices have reached record highs of more than $75 a barrel.

But he said Riyadh was a major oil supplier to Manila and the talks would deal with "overall economic relations," including oil and investment opportunities, as well as issues related to Philippine expatriates in the Gulf country.

Ms Arroyo is expected to appeal for clemency for six Filipinos facing the death penalty on murder charges in Saudi Arabia, the official said.

They include Rey Cortez, a welder in a car repair shop who was sentenced to death in May 2002 for killing a Pakistani taxi driver. Last June, Manila asked Saudi Arabia for mercy in the case.

Convicts on death row can be spared if their victim's family accepts payment of compensation known as "blood money."

In a separate case, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Friday that seven Filipino workers detained in Saudi Arabia had confessed to murdering three missing compatriots in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

Saudi officials are trying to determine whether human body parts found in plastic bin liners south of Jeddah on April 4 belonged to the missing Filipinos, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos said.

The seven suspects were among 52 Filipinos rounded up after the body parts were discovered. Manila is seeking the release of the 45 other detained Filipinos, Conejos said. *AFP*

# Reimpose oil price controls, gov't urged

From page A1

In a joint statement, the two lawmakers said it was high time Congress stepped in "and prevented oil companies from exploiting the volatile situation to jack up their profits."

## More price increases

Oil firms again increased pump prices by 50 centavos a liter on Saturday, part of the series of expected price increases because world oil prices are still going up, according to Puentevella.

"Energy Undersecretary Peter Abaya already warned that in about four to six weeks there would be a steady increase in oil prices, which could be about 50 centavos a week," said Puentevella, chair of the House committee on transportation and vice chair of the committee on energy,

In the explanatory note, HB 1065 harped on the failure of RA 8479 since its implementation in 1998 to dismantle the oil cartel of the Big Three—Pilipinas Shell, Petron and Caltex Philippines.

The bill seeks the scrapping of the oil deregulation law and the nationalization of the industry because the law "only worsened the problems in the oil industry and further victimized Filipino consumers," Beltran said.

Under RA 8479, the government adopted a policy of liberalizing and deregulating the downstream oil industry "in order to ensure a truly competitive market under a regime of fair prices, adequate and continuous supply of environmentally clean and high-quality petroleum products."

To this end, the state shall promote and encourage the entry of new participants in the downstream oil industry, and introduce adequate measures to ensure the attainment of these goals, the law said.

Under a liberalized setup, oil companies may directly import or purchase any quantity of crude oil and petroleum products from a foreign or domestic source, lease or own and operate refineries and other downstream oil facilities and market such crude oil and petroleum products.

## Alternative fuels

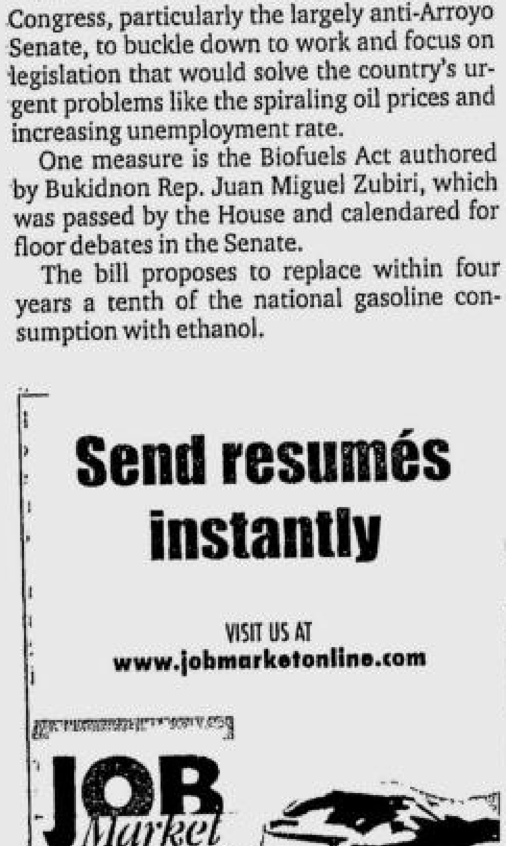
Puentevella and Javier sought a ceasefire on political bickering, saying the rising oil prices should move Congress into passing measures pertaining to the development of alternative fuels.

"It would be the height of insensitivity if lawmakers do not pay attention to our urgent concerns because of their obsession with partisan inquiries. The times call for our united effort against the rising prices of fuel, which affect all our daily lives," Puentevella said.

Puentevella and Javier appealed to Congress, particularly the largely anti-Arroyo Senate, to buckle down to work and focus on legislation that would solve the country's urgent problems like the spiraling oil prices and increasing unemployment rate.

One measure is the Biofuels Act authored by Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, which was passed by the House and calendared for floor debates in the Senate.

The bill proposes to replace within four years a tenth of the national gasoline consumption with ethanol.



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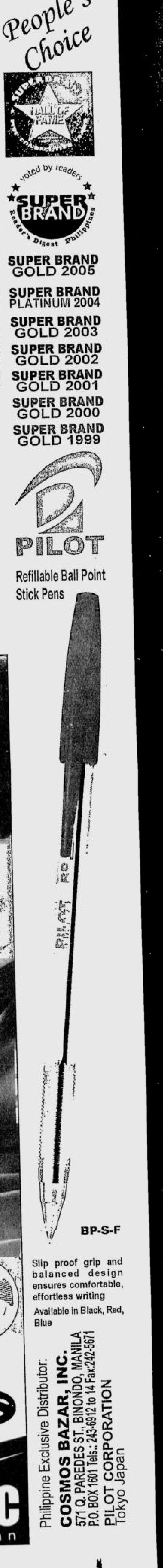

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# *RP envoy to Mexico Justo Orros dies; 72*

**By Volt Contreras**

ORROS

PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR TO Mexico Justo O. Orros Jr. died Saturday at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. He was 72.

Orros died of pancreatic cancer, according to Gilbert Asuque, spokesperson of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The former three-term governor of La Union from 1992 to 2001 was appointed to the foreign service post in March 2002. He was a member of Ateneo de Manila Law School Class of '56 and pursued further law studies in Madrid, Spain..

## Prosecuted Bingbong

He was the Quezon City fiscal who prosecuted and won the case against Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo for burning several barangays in Ilocos Sur decades ago. He also served as a regional trial court judge and later as a provincial board member of La Union and mayor of San Fernando City.

The late diplomat was married to Jocelyn Abrogar. They had three sons.

## Governor's grandson

He was a member of the Ortega clan, being a grandson of Joaquin Ortega, the first governor of La Union.

His remains are at the Christ The King church in Greenmeadows, Quezon City. They will be transferred to San Fernando City, La Union, on Tuesday where burial plans have yet to be announced, Asuque said.

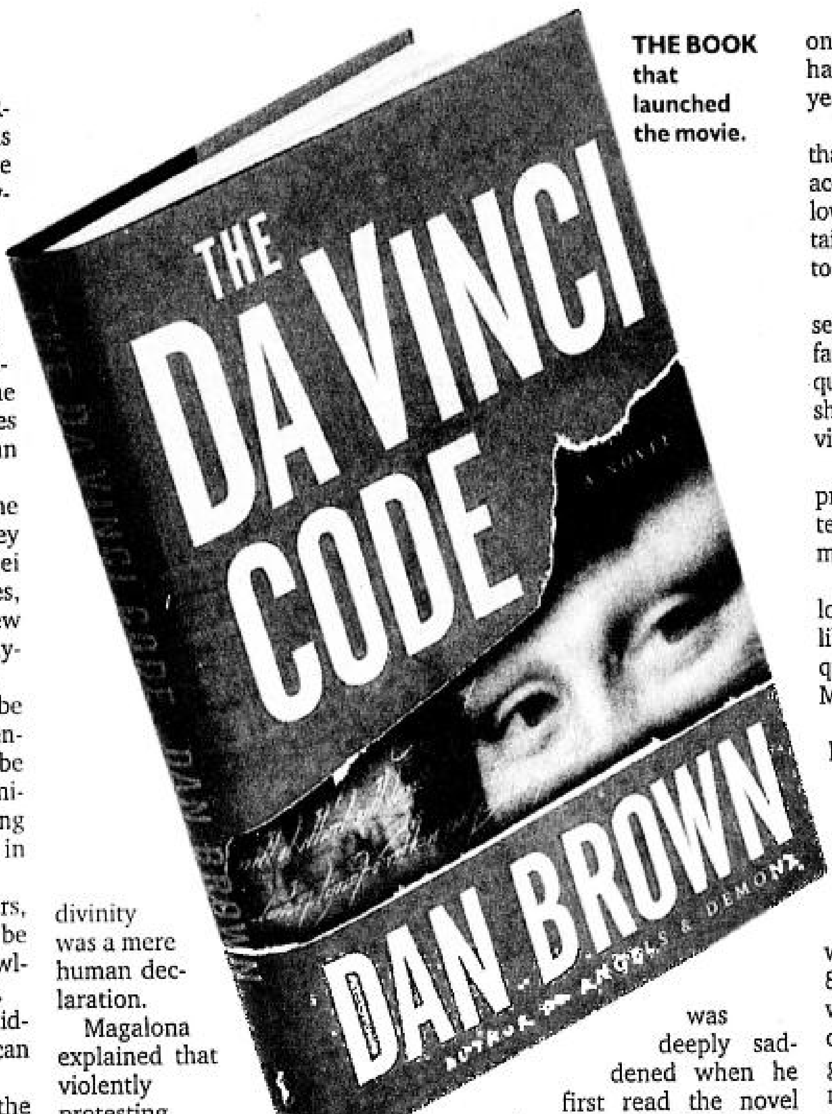
## A gentleman

Consul General to Mexico Ed de Vega, who worked with Orros for about a year, remembered him as "a gentleman who valued the historical connections between Mexico and the Philippines."

The Spanish-speaking Orros was also "very elegant, good looking and had great rapport with the Filipino community" abroad, De Vega said.

# Group maligned in 'Da Vinci' book set to welcome movie

**By Christian V. Esguerra**



**THE BOOK that launched the movie.**

THE CATHOLIC GROUP PORtrayed as a scheming, murderous cult in the best-selling book "The Da Vinci Code" is all for the showing of the film adaptation in predominantly Catholic Philippines.

Opus Dei, the controversial group founded in Spain by St. Josemaria Escriva in 1928, believes it's the better option in the wake of even more controversies generated by the novel by Dan Brown.

"The more you hide it, the more people will look for it," Joey Magalona, an Opus Dei spokesperson in the Philippines, told the INQUIRER in an interview Saturday, referring to the Hollywood film starring Tom Hanks.

But while viewers should be left with their "freedom to be entertained," he said they should be more discerning, if not discriminating, on information bordering between fact and fiction, both in the novel and movie.

Magalona hoped that viewers, especially the young, would be guided, say, by their more knowledgeable parents, if not priests.

"There should be parental guidance so when doubts arise, you can fix them right away," he said.

The Opus Dei reaction to the movie was curiously calm considering the way the novel depicted the movement—a cult that murders to protect a central deception in the 2,000-year-old faith: That Jesus Christ was married to Mary Magdalene and that Christ's divinity was a mere human declaration.

Magalona explained that violently protesting against the controversies would go against the spirit of Opus Dei (Work of God in Latin) which promotes the sanctification of one's work and a deeply religious life.

He admitted, though, that he was deeply saddened when he first read the novel that has purportedly sold around 40 million copies worldwide.

"I felt more sad for Jesus Christ," he said. "He was treated very unfairly. The Church's history is very rich and here you have one guy alleging that what we have believed for the last 2,000 years are all lies."

But Magalona was convinced that Jesus, the savior of humanity according to the Christian faith, allowed controversies like those contained in the "The Da Vinci Code" to come out for a higher good.

For one, he said, Catholics seemed more conscious of their faith, seeking answers even to questions like Christ's divinity that should have been addressed convincingly in basic religion classes.

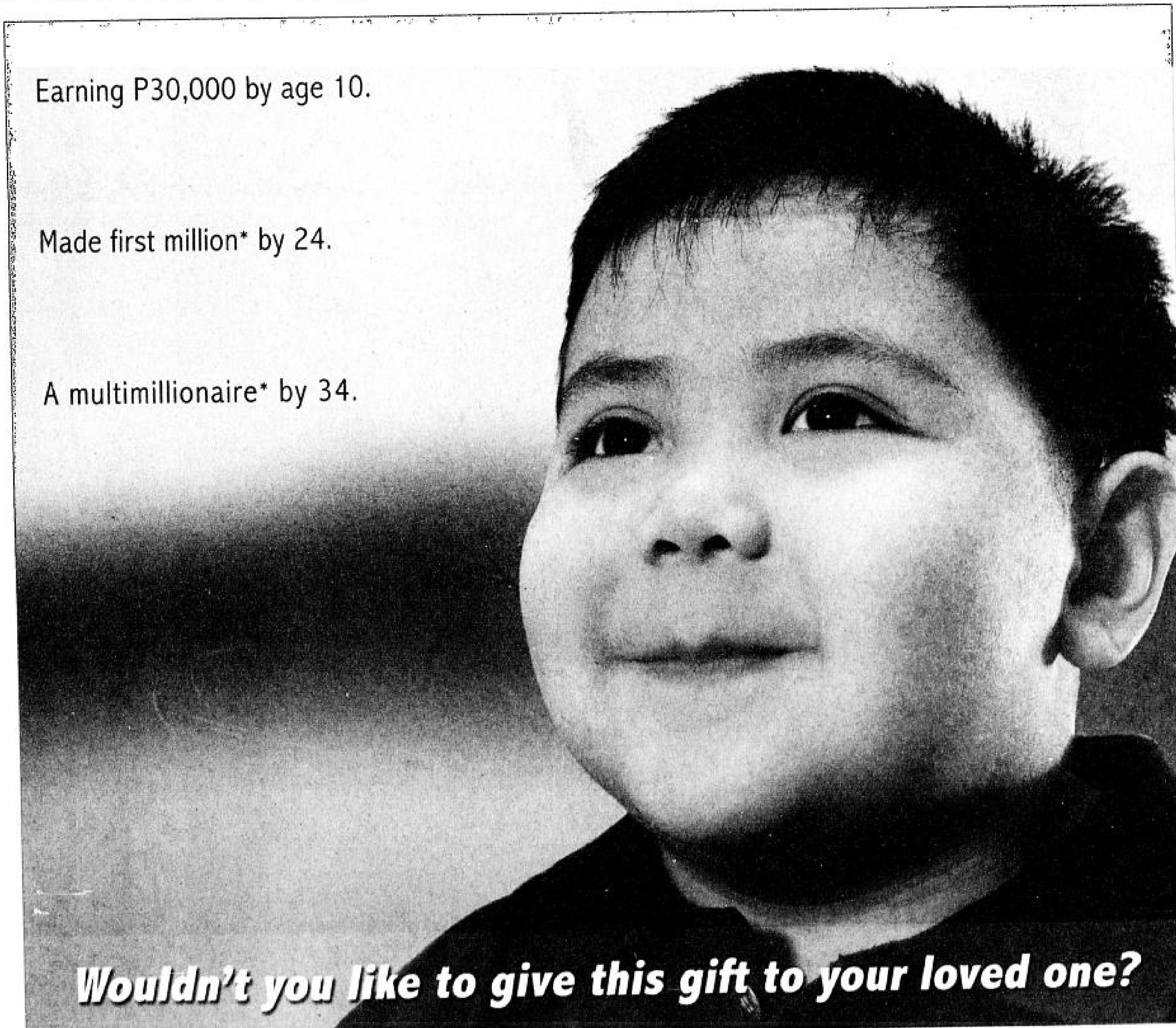
The bustling inquiries basically provided Church leaders an attentive audience for an even more energized catechism.

For another, the controversy allowed oft-misunderstood groups like Opus Dei to better respond to questions, even suspicions, Magalona said.

"Maybe this is the right time to let people know who we really are," he said. "I feel the controversy helped in a way because members are more open to talking about Opus Dei with nonmembers."

In the past, Opus Dei, a worldwide membership of around 84,000 priests and lay people, was forced to hide under a cloak of secrecy partly because of allegations ranging from it being a masonic group to a right-wing organization placing the Vatican at its mercy.

There are around 3,000 members in the Philippines spread out in 40 Opus Dei centers in Metro Manila, Laguna, Batangas, Cebu, Iloilo and Bacolod.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# RP overseas schools urged to promote Pinoy identity

**By Alcuin Papa**

PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS OVERSEAS MUST continue promoting the Filipino identity, Department of Education officer in charge Fe Hidalgo said in a speech she delivered last week before officials of Philippine schools in Xiamen, China.

"As Filipino educators overseas, you all know the importance of promoting Filipino identity. But... you must [also] recognize the need to teach Filipino children abroad that they, too, are part of that Filipino identity, not just because they belong to our race, but because they, too, contribute to the richness of our race. They are integral to our national pride and our national identity. The efforts we made to make Philippine schools overseas possible are all about our children and what we teach them," Hidalgo told her audience of administrators and educators.

She asked overseas school officials to maintain both quality and access to overseas schools. She also suggested that educators maintain a high degree of quality and professionalism in the management of their schools.

"I am sure that you are very much aware of the important role you play in the Philippine education system and in the lives of the young Filipino boys and girls you serve. But while you continue to provide affordable quality education based on the Philippine curriculum, while you contribute to shaping the Filipino identity of the overseas Filipino children and youth you serve, and while you endeavor to ensure that the standards overseas can enable students to be readily integrated into the Philippine educational system upon their return to our country, you must also ensure that your schools are managed well," she said.

Hidalgo also suggested that school managers "find ways of making your schools run productively and smoothly. Provide the leadership necessary to ensure quality performance in all aspects of school management."

She said the hiring and selection guidelines for school managers and teachers must be tailored to the same standards as the host country "to ensure that the management of your schools—and the management of your classrooms—are at their optimal levels. Also, provide opportunities for the professional development of your principals and teachers."

So Filipino overseas students would have a smoother transition to local schools, Hidalgo said the teaching and testing methods must conform to local standards "so we can find out how well our overseas Filipino students perform, and find out how well they can adjust to studying in Philippine schools upon their return."

She also suggested that overseas schools build links to local schools to keep in touch with standards being used in the country.

Hidalgo also pushed for the adoption and eventual institutionalization of the DepEd's flagship program called Schools First Initiative (SFI). The program seeks to bring in other education stakeholders into projects meant to develop and support schools in the community.

# METRO

Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil**
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**CHARGE!**
**Policemen from the five districts in the metropolis displayed their crowd management skills during the civil disturbance management competition held yesterday at the Rizal Park. The Manila Police District topped the event** ***(See story on Page A26).*** RODEL ROTONI

# MMDA waves 'Pink Cloth' on Wednesday

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE "PINK CLOTH" CAMPAIGN, THE NEWEST TRAFFIC SCHEME of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, will make its "debut" on Wednesday in Cubao, one of the most traffic-prone areas in the metropolis.

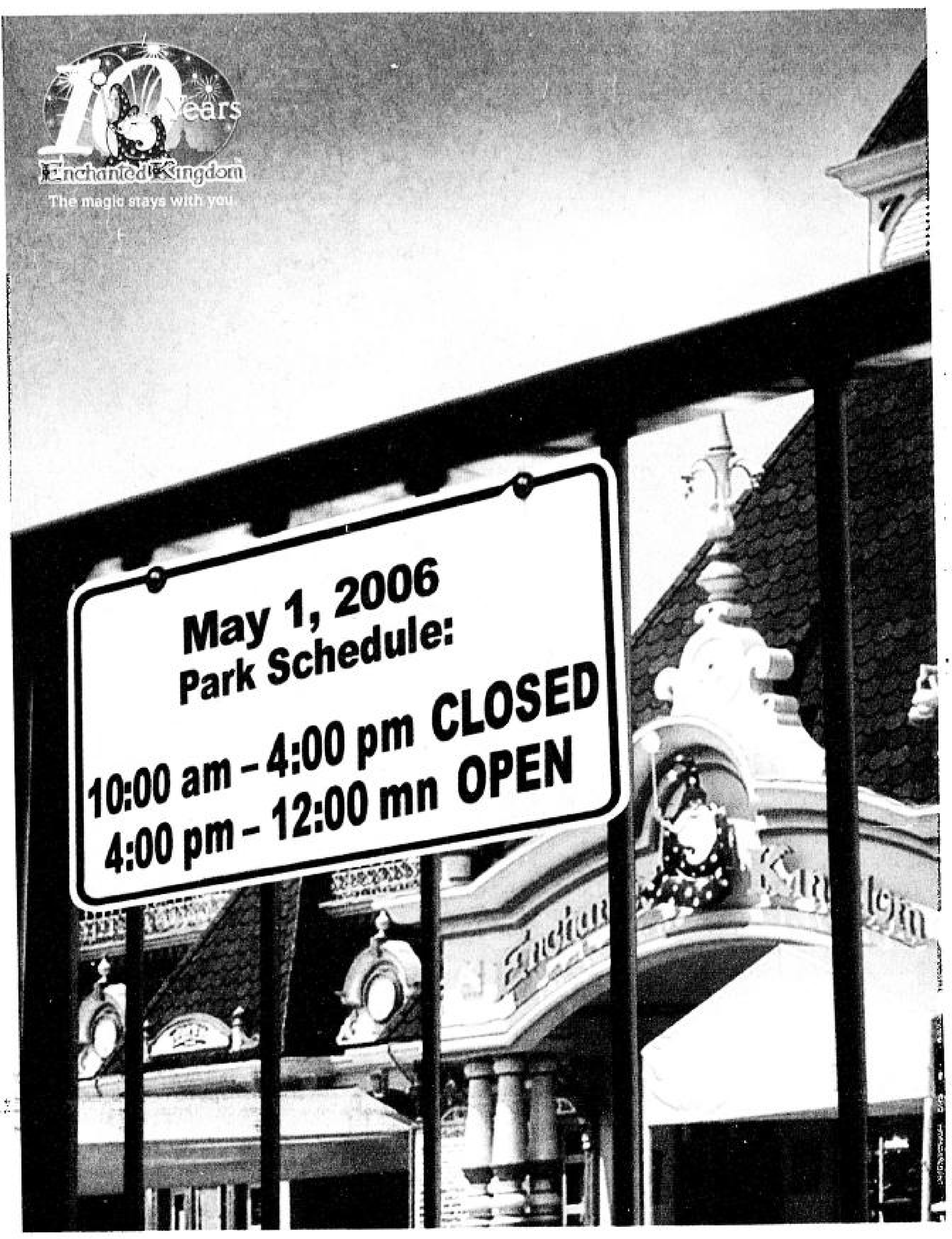
"We will first launch it in Cubao because that's the best place for us to launch. It's the most practical area for us because that's where we have loading platforms (for buses)," MMDA Traffic Operations Center executive director Angelito Vergel de Dios said yesterday.

Beginning Wednesday, traffic enforcers of the MMDA holding pink flags attached to light aluminum poles will be stationed on the northbound side of Edsa in Cubao, Quezon City. The agency said it already has 10 pink flags, with 20 more expected to be delivered today, in time for the scheme's implementation.

The campaign, a brainchild of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, is aimed at preventing buses from stopping too long at loading points to fetch passengers. Traffic enforcers will use the pink flag to block the doors of overstaying buses.

The cloth will bear the messages: "Overstaying *na ang* bus *na ito. Sa susunod na* bus *na lang sumakay*" (This bus has stayed too long. Please take the next bus).

Fernando came up with the "Pink Cloth" scheme as he observed that the measures being used by traffic enforcers to instill discipline in bus drivers lining up at passenger stops were ineffective. After Cubao, the MMDA plans to implement the campaign in North Avenue, Ayala Avenue and the Magallanes Interchange in Makati City.



Times have definitely changed, but only for Labor Day.
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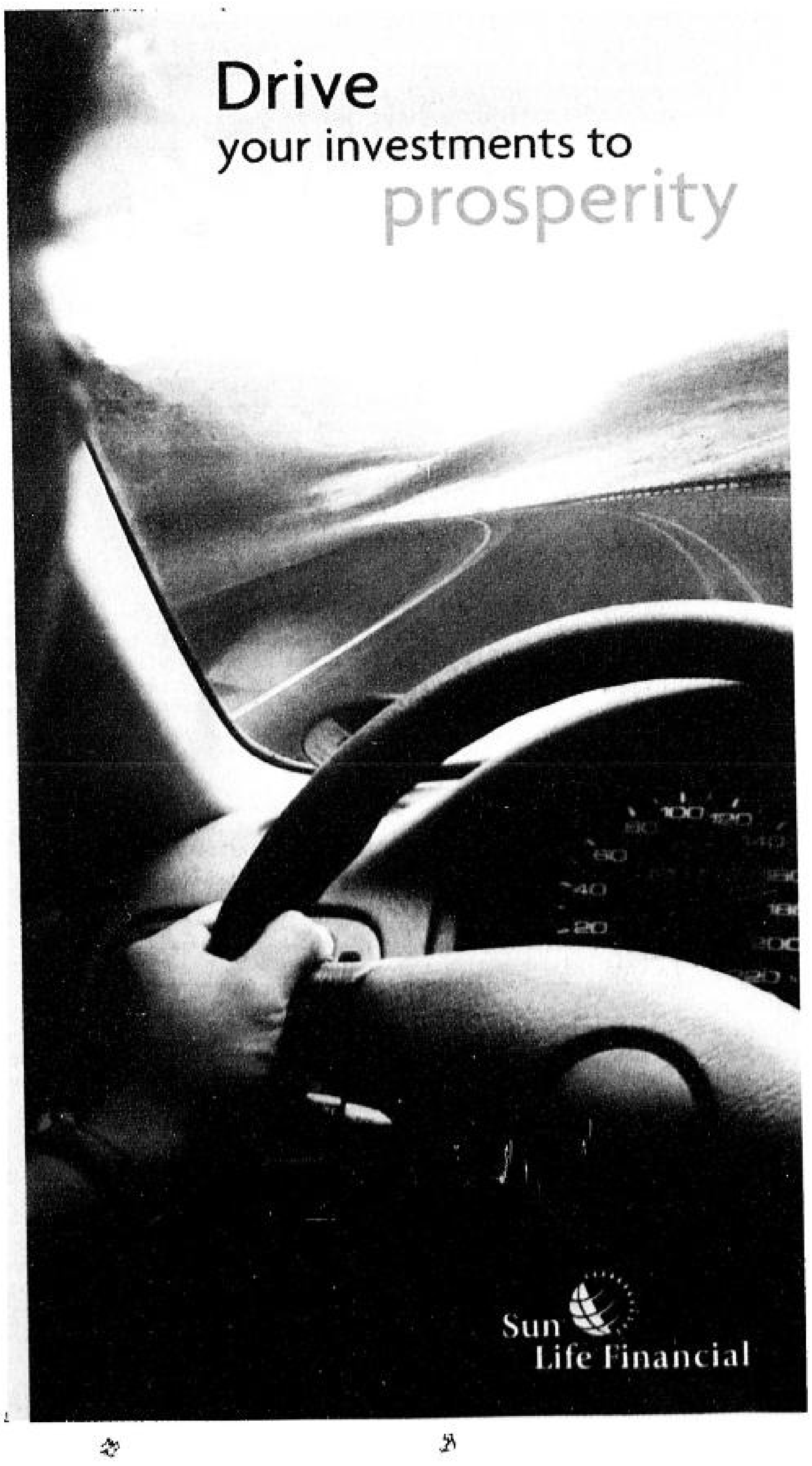

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# Manila police best Metro antiriot force

**By Margaux C. Ortiz**

THEIR FREQUENT FACE-OFFS with protesters, especially those trying to set foot on the Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) bridge for the past months, have finally paid off.

For the first time in four years, members of the Manila Police District topped the National Capital Region Police Office's civil disturbance management (CDM) competition held at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park, Manila yesterday morning.

Representatives from the Northern Police District's CDM unit, last year's champion, were a close second, according to NCRPO chief Director Vidal Querol.

"The MPD unit's combination of tactics and timely employment of resources made them win the competition," Querol said in an interview.

He added that the members of the MPD CDM unit used the "wedge formation" in dealing with the unruly crowd, who were played by policemen detailed to the NCRPO.

Querol added that the members of the MPD unit were also credited for the completeness of their uniforms and equipment, "especially their newly painted shields."

"Although it was a close competition between NPD and MPD, the defending champion placed second because they were a bit careless in protecting their men," the NCRPO director said, explaining that many of the NPD unit members were "captured" and "mauled" by mock protesters.

Querol said the Southern Police District's unit placed third in the competition.

## Daily practices worth it

Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, chief of the MPD Operations Division, said their unit's daily practices since April 3 "had been worth it."

"We were able to prove ourselves in the CDM formations and problem solving aspect of the competition," he added.

Abarzosa said the MPD CDM unit faced different challenges yesterday, such as lengthy negotiations with group leaders and violent protesters.

"When the protesters began hitting and pelting stones at the policemen, our CDM team used water dispersal in controlling the crowd and arrested the violent ones," he said.

The MPD official said their unit, composed of 120 personnel, were led by Chief Insp. Edgar Alintog.

"Our achievement only shows that we are prepared to face any rally or protest demonstration," Abarzosa said.

## No psychological war ploy

He also denied that the Philippine National Police had used the competition as a "psychological war ploy" before the May 1 Labor Day protests, as alleged by militant leaders.

"The competition is held every year so there is no reason for us to use it as a psychological war tool," the MPD official said.

Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes had said that militant groups were planning a big protest rally on May 1, in commemoration of Labor Day and to demand the immediate ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Reyes and hundreds of other protesters were hosed down by the police when they succeeded in reclaiming Chino Roces bridge for a few minutes earlier this month.

MPD officials had banned militants from setting foot in the area because of its proximity to Malacañang Palace.

# Marikina closes 13 streets today

**By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

DRIVING TO THE MARIKINA City Hall or the City Public Market today?

Avoid these 13 streets in the city: Sumulong Highway (from JP Rizal to Gil Fernando Street); Shoe Avenue (from Santos Street to Gomez Street); W. Paz Street (from Cruz Street to the City Hall); Villalon Street (from JP Rizal to Shoe Avenue); Jacinto Street (from Sumulong Highway to W. Paz Street); P. Dela Paz Street (from Cruz Street to Shoe Avenue);

Kapitan Denciong Street (from Cruz to Shoe Avenue); E. Dela Paz Street (from W. Paz Street to Sumulong Highway); Mc Donalds Avenue (from City Hall to Sumulong Highway); Jacamar Street (from Shoe Avenue to Mc Donald's Avenue); Oriole Street (from Shoe Avenue to City Hall); Cruz Street (from P. Dela Paz Street to Sumulong Highway) and P. Burgos Street (from W. Paz Street to Sumulong Highway).

## Timeframe

From 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., these roads around the City Hall and the public market will be closed to all motorized vehicles.

And it's not because the city government is superstitious, it's just that today has been declared "Carless Day" in Marikina.

Only pedestrians or those driving bicycles will be allowed to enter the 13 streets.

On the other hand, public utility vehicles will be rerouted to minor streets. Government emergency vehicles and construction vehicles, however, are not banned from the 13 streets, city bikeways office head Lota Contreras said.

Marikina has long been promoting the use of bicycles as a healthy and cheaper alternative to cars, especially amid the rising prices of gasoline. The city government has even constructed over 30 kilometers of bike lanes, the only local government unit to embark on an integrated bikeways system.

CHILDREN listen intently as a volunteer tells them a story in a mall in the metropolis. Inset: Silayan, one of Alitaptap's pioneers.

# *Volunteer storytellers want to revive kids' interest in reading*

**By Julie M. Aurelio**

TO TODAY'S GENERATION OF children reared on digital media, video games, MTV and the Internet, reading might seem like a boring way to pass the time.

This has prompted a group of volunteers to take on the challenge of initiating children to the delights of reading—by injecting action and humor into the stories they tell.

Formed in 1999, the Alitaptap Storytellers Philippines was named after the firefly, "whose mystic lights in the dark connote the enchantment which storytellers weave into the stories they tell," said Manolo "Nolo" Silayan, one of the group's pioneers.

## Sheer chance

A son of Vic Silayan, the late veteran actor, Silayan said he got involved in the group by sheer chance. A training and development consultant, he was on his way to work when an ad in the paper caught his eye. It called for volunteers for a children's storytelling session at the Museo Pambata. Silayan said he promptly volunteered and despite his initial misgivings, went on to become one of the group's presidents.

An internal misunderstanding, however, caused a split in Alitaptap almost a year later. When the faction led by thespian Bodgie Pascua left the group, Silayan saw it as a chance to come up with the style that would later define Alitaptap's approach to storytelling.

He explained that at the time of the split, the group was having difficulty defining what approach to use.

"Some storytellers were so animated, they ended up enthralling the kids with their antics," Silayan said. In addition, they would adlib some parts of the story to make it more interesting.

## Book-based approach

Silayan, however, said he preferred the book-based storytelling approach in which the storyteller "interestingly and animatingly lifts his story from a book he reads" with the use of his voice, body language, the environment and even the audience.

"You don't just sit down and read a story aloud. You read it first, then you narrate it to your audience using your voice and body," he added.

Silayan, however, wants to take it a step further—by coaching librarians into loosening up and becoming amusing keepers of children's books.

"I tell librarians during workshops, 'You're librarians! You should be fun and wear party hats! Librarians should not be stereotyped as dusty, cranky people. In fact, I think the venue for storytelling sessions should be the library because it's where the books are," Silayan said.

## New home

Last year, Alitaptap moved to its new home at the National Library along T.M. Kalaw in Manila where it has been conducting its performances.

Despite the dropping number of volunteers each year, Alitaptap president Charlyn Chua is optimistic. "I don't think we're lacking in manpower. What we need are people's commitment," she said.

For Silayan, he finds fulfillment not in performing, but in training teachers, librarians, and children to perform for others.

Chua, on the other hand, feels a different kind of fulfillment whenever she sees children, laughing along or hanging on to her every word and action whenever she tells a story.

Hopefully, the spark started by Alitaptap will fan out into a full-blown love for reading among children, instead of flickering out.

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# Another body found in Pasig

**By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.**

FROM A COMPOUND OF SHABU DENS TO A dumping ground for bodies?

Police found early yesterday morning the body of a man sprawled near a vacant lot in Pasig City, where national antidrug operatives raided nearly 40 shanties being used as drug dens two months ago.

The man, who had multiple stab wounds, was the third to have been dumped on F. Soriano Street in Barangay Sto. Tomas in a span of a month, puzzling and alarming the city police.

"I have already ordered my men to investigate the cases as well as to strictly monitor the area," Pasig City Police chief Senior Supt. Romeo Abaring told the INQUIRER.

The street is less than half a kilometer away from the Pasig City Hall and the Eastern Police District Headquarters.

The body was discovered at about 2 a.m. yesterday when a witness reported it to the police. Lawmen were dispatched to the area where they saw the body of a man sprawled on the ground.

The man was 5'6" tall with mestizo-looking features. A tattoo of a human face with two horns was on his right leg, police said in an official report.

"We are still trying to determine if there is a any connection between this incident and the two previous incidents, especially because they were dumped in just one area," Abaring said.

The first victim was found on the street on March 23, more than a month after police raided more than 40 shabu restaurants in Sitio Mapayapa. He had more than 10 stab wounds in his chest.

On April 19, another man was found dumped on the same street.

# METROBRIEFS

## Cop, woman shot dead by robbers in QC

A POLICEMAN and his woman companion were gunned down by suspected robbers while waiting for a ride home last Saturday in Quezon City. SPO1 Adelberto Maraingan, 47, detailed to the Quezon City Police District mobile patrol unit, and Josefina Bagayawa, 49, were standing on Lanzones Drive in Barangay Payatas-B at 6:15 p.m. when four men approached them, police said. Without a word, the suspects began shooting the two, using handguns of an unknown type and caliber, a report by SPO1 Demosthenes Rebancos of the QCPD criminal investigation division said. One of the suspects then grabbed Bagayawa's handbag which contained an undetermined amount of cash before they sped off on board motorcycles, Rebancos said. Maraingan was rushed to the Far Eastern University Hospital, while Bagayawa was taken to the Fairview General Hospital, but both did not survive. The policeman sustained six gunshot wounds while Bagayawa had two gunshot wounds in the head and two more on the right arm, police said.

*DJ Yap*

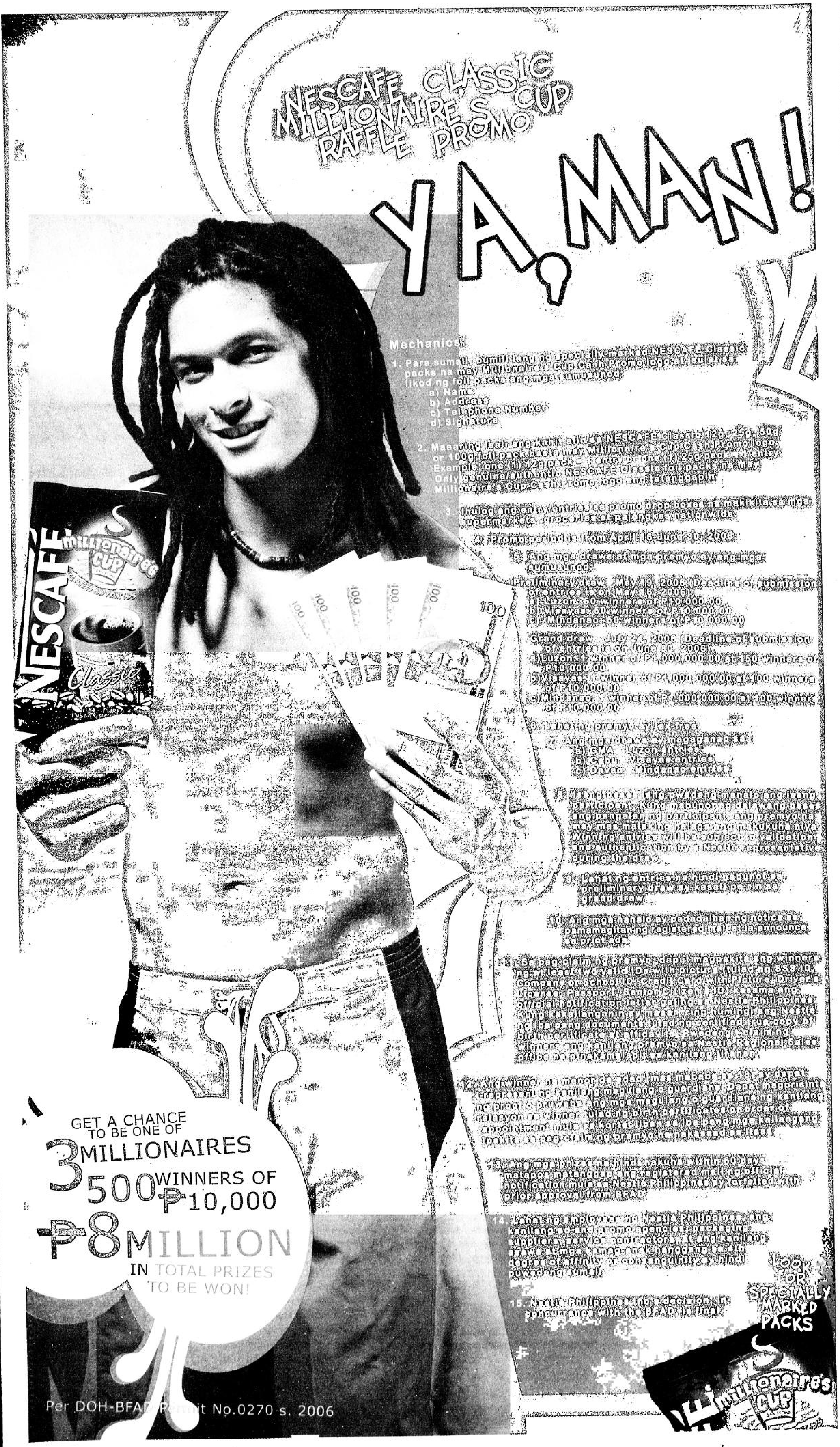
## Youth group holds summit

A PROGRESSIVE national youth group discussed Charter change, among other issues, during a youth summit held over the weekend at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City. Over 100 leaders and members of the Demokratiko-Sosyalistang Kabataan ng Pilipinas (DSKP) attended the meeting with the theme: "The Philippines in Revolution Situation: The Youth in Focus." DSKP leader Eric Castillo, the conference spokesperson, said the summit was held to discuss possible provisions that could be included in Cha-cha talks that concern the youth. Also tackled were various issues confronting the youth such as education, employment, migration, health and drug addiction, and political violence.

## Maximum tolerance

MAY 1 being Labor Day, militant workers groups are free to stage protest actions to demand better working conditions and higher wages in Quezon City. Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. gave this assurance yesterday as he ordered the city police to observe maximum tolerance toward protesters. But militants will still need to secure a permit from his office, he pointed out. "If they apply for a permit, I will approve their request, because we are encouraging them (to exercise their right to protest)," Belmonte said in a statement. "We do not have a repressive regime here in Quezon City," he added. Demonstrations in the city have sometimes been marked by violent dispersal of rallyists, scuffles between policemen and protesters, even arrests, but recently, the police have toned down their treatment of rallyists. Belmonte directed Quezon City Police District director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr. to ensure that the workers' rights are protected when they celebrate Labor Day. He also asked Radovan to provide enough police troops to secure events commemorating the occasion. "We are trying to preserve order but we should allow people to march in our streets," the mayor said.

*DJ Yap*



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5. Ang mga draws at mga premyo ay ang mga sumusunod:

   Preliminary draw: May 19, 2006 (Deadline of submission of entries is on May 16, 2006)
   a) Luzon: 50 winners of P10,000.00
   b) Visayas: 50 winners of P10,000.00
   c) Mindanao: 50 winners of P10,000.00

   Grand draw: July 24, 2006 (Deadline of submission of entries is on June 30, 2006)
   a) Luzon: 1 winner of P1,000,000.00 at 150 winners of P10,000.00
   b) Visayas: 1 winner of P1,000,000.00 at 100 winners of P10,000.00
   c) Mindanao: 1 winner of P1,000,000.00 at 100 winners of P10,000.00

6. Lahat ng premyo ay tax-free.

7. Ang mga draws ay magaganap sa:
   a) GMA - Luzon entries
   b) Cebu - Visayas entries
   c) Davao - Mindanao entries

8. Isang beses lang pwedeng manalo ang isang participant. Kung mabunot ng dalawang beses ang pangalan ng participant, ang premyo na may mas malaking halaga ang makukuha niya. Winning entries will be subject to validation and authentication by a Nestle representative during the draw.

9. Lahat ng entries na hindi nabunot sa preliminary draw ay kasali pa rin sa grand draw.

10. Ang mga nanalo ay padadalhan ng notice sa pamamagitan ng registered mail at ia-announce sa print ads.

11. Sa pag-claim ng premyo, dapat magpakita ang winners ng at least two valid IDs with picture (tulad ng SSS ID, Company or School ID, Credit Card with Picture, Driver's License, Passport, Senior Citizen's ID) kasama ang official notification letter galing sa Nestle Philippines. Kung kakailanganin ay maaaring humingi ang Nestle ng iba pang documents tulad ng certified true copy of birth certificate at affidavits. Pwedeng i-claim ng winners ang kanilang premyo sa Nestle Regional Sales office na pinakamalapit sa kanilang tirahan.

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Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo

**Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo,**
President, Republic of the Philippines

Dear graduates, I salute your success. In your little ways you have made a difference. You have started lighting the candle that brightens the future of our country. I encourage you to work harder and embrace each sacrifice that would come your way as you climb another step to the fulfillment of your dreams.

You, our youths are the hope and strength of our country. Hasten your values and continue to strive hard and be of service to God and to our fellowmen. Be always inspired to keep the candle burning.

As the famous line of John F. Kennedy says, "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." So, take the lead to be the catalyst for change. Do your best to love, serve and protect our only Philippines.

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adership,
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Julie's
BAKESHOP

# Iran says it won't plug oil flow despite nuke row

TEHRAN—OPEC HEAVYWEIGHT Iran said on Saturday that it would not disrupt its oil exports as a weapon in its nuclear dispute with the West.

Fears that Tehran, the world's fourth biggest oil exporter, could cut back its crude oil exports or disrupt energy shipments from the Gulf have helped drive oil prices to record highs above $75 a barrel in recent days.

Tension between Iran and the West escalated sharply this month after Tehran said it had produced its first batch of enriched uranium and was forging ahead with plans for industrial-scale output, despite UN demands that it halt all enrichment work.

Western nations, who are threatening to press for UN sanctions, accuse Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons and insist Iran stop enrichment, which has military and civilian uses. Iran says it only wants to produce electricity.

Some Iranian officials have in the past suggested Tehran may use oil as a weapon in the dispute.

But Oil Minister Kazem Vaziri said on Saturday Iran's oil supplies would not be disrupted.

"We strongly believe there is no reason for sanctions but in any case we will not cut our oil exports," the minister told Reuters on the sidelines of an energy forum in Doha.

The United Nations Security Council may consider sanctions against Tehran after studying a report due on April 28 from the International Atomic Agency (IAEA) on whether Iran is meeting its demands for a halt to uranium enrichment.

"During the eight-year war imposed on us by Iraq we never stopped exporting," the minister said in reference to the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq conflict.

He also quashed speculation that Iran could redirect exports to customers that were sympathetic to its cause. Iran ships most of its crude to the Far East while the majority of supplies to Europe goes to France, Italy, Spain, Greece and Turkey.

"We will continue to meet our obligations to all of our customers," Vaziri said.

In Moscow, a senior Iranian diplomat played down a radio report that Tehran had a "basic agreement" with Moscow to enrich uranium in Russia and said no new deal had been struck. *Reuters*

# Japan, S. Korea reach accord over islets row

TOKYO—JAPAN HEAVED A SIGH of relief on Sunday after South Korea and Japan struck an accord averting a standoff over an ocean survey near a chain of disputed islets.

"It was the most realistic compromise at that stage," Asahi Shimbun said in its editorial. "Both dropped their claims and reached a peaceful compromise."

"We praise the efforts made by the two sides to avert the crisis," the influential newspaper said.

Tension had mounted since Japan pushed last week for a survey of the ocean bed around the disputed islands, called Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan, in the Sea of Japan (East Sea).

Tokyo said it needed to conduct the study to submit a counter-proposal to an international oceanographic meeting in June, which was to consider Seoul's proposal to use Korean names for features on the seabed.

But the two countries defused the latest row after South Korean Vice Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan and his Japanese counterpart Shotaro Yachi held their last-ditch talks in Seoul.

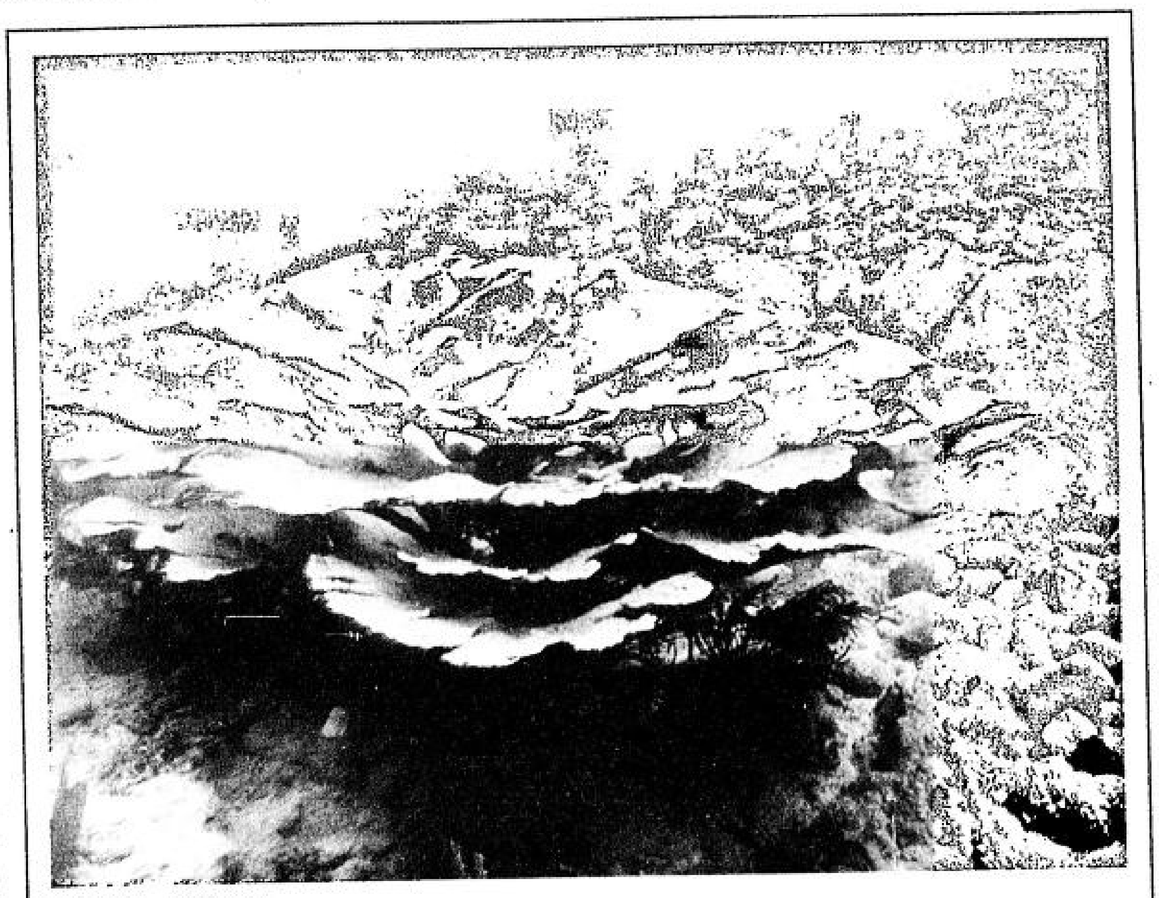
Under the settlement, South Korea agreed to delay its push for the naming proposal while Japan suspended the study.

"The agreement resulted from the efforts of the both sides, which handled the issue calmly under international law," Chief Cabinet Secretary Shintaro Abe said late Saturday.

"We want to make efforts to build a forward-looking friendship with South Korea," Abe added.

Hidenao Nakagawa, a senior lawmaker of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), called for continued efforts to ease the tension, saying: "We are sharing the same sea."

But the conservative Sankai Shimbun daily warned that a territorial row can easily emerge again if Seoul makes a similar proposal next year. *AFP*



**CORAL AT RISK**

**Rising sea temperatures could signal a repeat of the widespread coral death that swept the Caribbean in 2005. About 40 percent of coral died around parts of the US Virgin Islands last year, and the coral that survived likely isn't healthy enough to survive another hot summer, says the US Geological Survey.**

AP

# Prodi faces break in his coalition

ROME—JUST THREE DAYS AFTER his election victory was confirmed, Italy's prime minister-in-waiting Romano Prodi faced a rupture in his coalition and an ally predicted the fall of his government.

The prediction, by Piero Fassino, leader of Democrats of the Left (DS), came as Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's supporters continued to demand vote recounts even after a Supreme Court ruling on Wednesday confirmed Prodi's wafer-thin victory.

Fassino's gloomy forecast sprang from a tussle for the prestigious position of Lower House speaker between Fassino's party and the Communist Refoundation led by Fausto Bertinotti.

Members of the DS were left smarting when their candidate Massimo D'Alema pulled out of the race on Friday to avoid a coalition collapse after Bertinotti, who toppled Prodi's 1998 government, threatened to quit if he did not get the job.

"We have already seen after two days, that this is how it will finish," said Fassino, whose party gained the largest number of votes in the April 9-10 election, the closest in post-war Italian history.

"Is it possible that I cannot trust (Prodi) any more?" he added in an interview with la Repubblica newspaper.

Prodi, who spent the day at his family home, in the northern city of Bologna, denied there were rumblings of discontent.

"Everything is going to be fine, everything is going to be fine," he told reporters after returning from a cycle ride.

His calm was not shared by Italian newspapers that unanimously said he could ill afford bickering with the smallest majority in Italian history and with Berlusconi, who has refused to concede defeat, plotting a fierce opposition. *Reuters*

# Generals' revolt expands Rumsfeld debate to young officers

WASHINGTON—THE REVOLT BY retired generals who publicly criticized Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has opened an extraordinary debate among younger officers, in military academies, in the armed services' staff colleges and even in command posts and mess halls in Iraq.

Junior and midlevel officers are discussing whether the war plans for Iraq reflected unvarnished military advice, whether the retired generals should have spoken out, whether active-duty generals will feel free to state their views in private sessions with the civilian leaders and, most divisive of all, whether Rumsfeld should resign.

In recent weeks, military correspondents of The New York Times discussed these issues with dozens of younger officers and cadets in classrooms and with combat units in the field, as well as in informal conversations at the Pentagon and in e-mail exchanges and telephone calls.

To protect their careers, the officers were granted anonymity so they could speak frankly about the debates they have had and have heard. The stances that emerged are anything but uniform, although all seem colored by deep concern over the quality of civil-military relations, and the way ahead in Iraq.

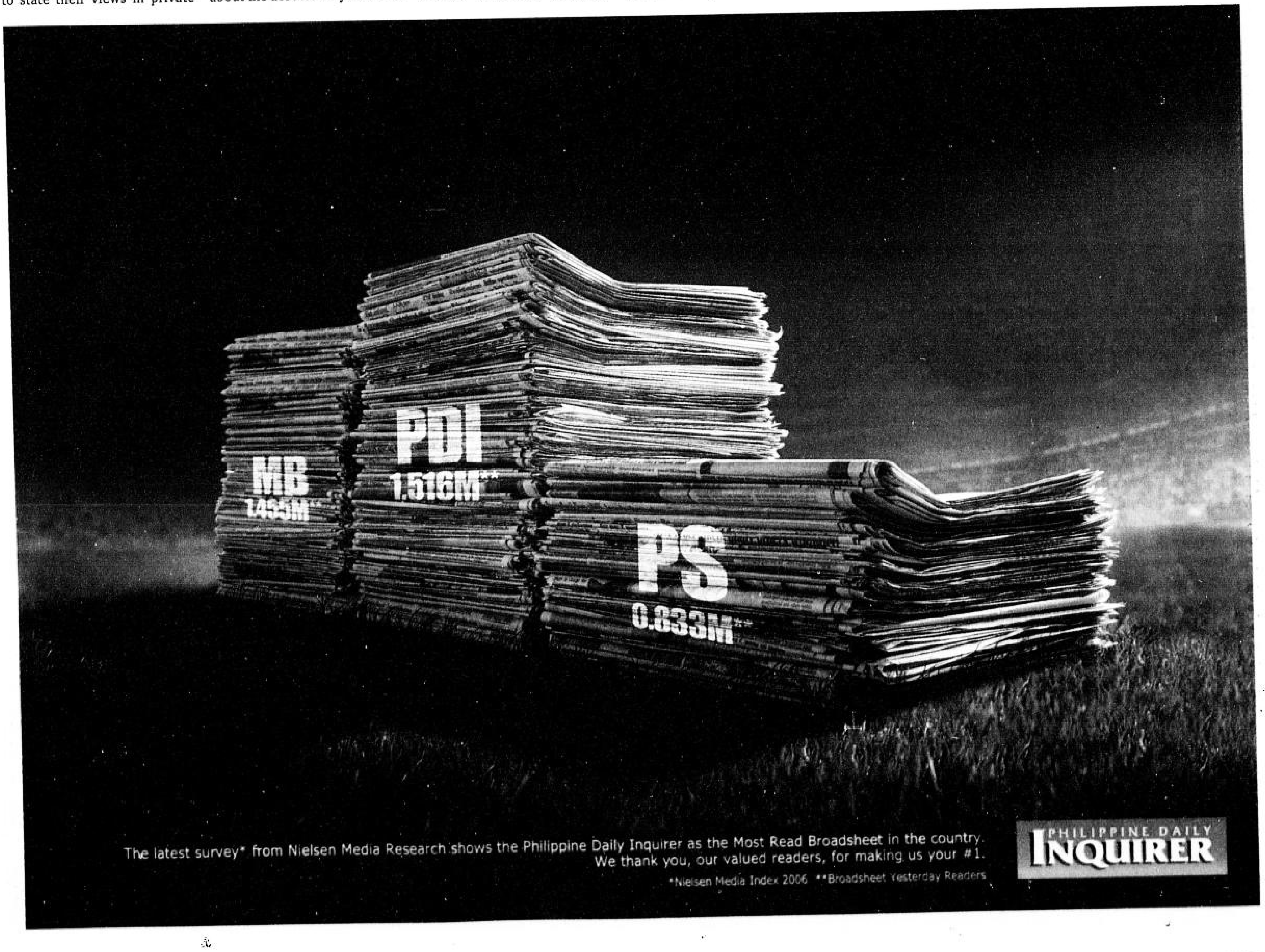
The discussions often flare with anger, particularly among many midlevel officers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan and face the prospect of additional tours of duty.

"This is about the moral bankruptcy of general officers who lived through the Vietnam era yet refused to advise our civilian leadership properly," said one Army major in the Special Forces who has served two combat tours. "I can only hope that my generation does better someday."

One Army colonel enrolled in a defense department university said an informal poll among his classmates indicated that about 25 percent believed that Rumsfeld should resign, and 75 percent believed that he should remain. But of the second group, two-thirds thought he should acknowledge errors that were made and "show that he is not the intolerant and inflexible person some paint him to be," the colonel said.

A field-grade officer now serving in Iraq said he thought it was incorrect for the retired generals to call for Rumsfeld's resignation. His position, he said, is that "if there is a judgment to be cast, it rests as much upon the shoulders of our senior military leaders."

That officer, like several others interviewed, emphasized that while these issues often occupied officers' minds, the debate had not hobbled the military's ability to function in Iraq. "No impact here that I can see regarding this subject," he said. *NYT*



The latest survey* from Nielsen Media Research shows the Philippine Daily Inquirer as the Most Read Broadsheet in the country.
We thank you, our valued readers, for making us your #1.

*Nielsen Media Index 2006 **Broadsheet Yesterday Readers

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

# Iraqi leaders end deadlock, name Maliki PM

BAGHDAD — TOUGH-TALKING Shiite Jawad al-Maliki was tasked to form a coalition government by Iraqi leaders on Saturday, ending a four-month political deadlock that many feared could pitch the country into a sectarian civil war.

"We are going to form a family that will not be based on sectarian or ethnic backgrounds," Maliki told reporters, seeking to shed a hardline Shiite image and present himself as a prime minister able to unite Shiite Muslims, Sunni Arabs and Kurds.

But in his first policy speech, Maliki called for Iraq's powerful militias to be merged with US-trained security forces—an explosive issue in the country because militias are tied to political parties and operate along religious lines.

"Arms should be in the hands of the government. There is a law that calls for the merging of militias with the armed forces," said Maliki, nominated by the ruling Shiite Alliance, the largest bloc in parliament after December elections.

The United States, which had blamed the four months of political paralysis for fueling violence, hopes a national unity government will foster stability in Iraq and enable it to start bringing home its more than 130,000 troops.

## Five US soldiers killed

"This is a good day for Iraq. It is an important day for Iraq," US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in a conference call with reporters in Washington. "This is someone with whom we can work."

MALIKI: Formidable tasks ahead. AP

Five US soldiers were killed on Saturday in two separate roadside bomb attacks south of Baghdad, the US military said.

More than 2,380 US soldiers have been killed in Iraq since the March 2003 US-led invasion to topple Saddam Hussein.

Maliki, who has 30 days to present his Cabinet to parliament, will have to tackle an insurgency that draws support from the minority Sunni community and sectarian bloodshed that has exploded since a February bombing of a Shiite shrine.

Sunnis held sway under Saddam's rule but the majority Shiites are now the leading force in politics.

Maliki must also rescue oil-rich Iraq's economy, which has been starved of foreign investment because of the violence.

The Shiite Alliance chose Maliki—an official in Iraq's oldest Islamist party—after its original candidate, interim Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, bowed out. Other parties opposed Jaafari on grounds he was too weak.

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani formally designated Maliki as prime minister after a breakthrough in negotiations on Friday and asked him to form Iraq's first full-term government since Saddam was ousted in 2003.

Earlier, parliament reelected Talabani as president.

Talabani, a Kurd, is the first non-Arab president of an Arab country.

Sunni Islamist Mahmoud al-Mashhadani was elected as parliamentary speaker. A former medical officer in Saddam's army, he was jailed for joining outlawed Islamist groups.

## Test for Maliki

US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, a driving force in pressing Iraqi politicians to end their differences, urged Maliki to choose strong and competent ministers to unite Iraq.

Appointing officials overseeing powerful ministries, including the interior, defense and oil portfolios, will test Maliki's ability as a deal-maker.

Sunni leaders have accused the Shiite-run Interior Ministry of condoning death squads targeting Sunnis so there may be a protracted battle over that portfolio. Shiites deny the charge.

Maliki, who spent years in exile in Iran and Syria, has pressed for the execution of Sunni insurgents who have killed Iraqis and a purge of former members of Saddam's Baath party from government.

He had been widely viewed as a sectarian politician, but Sunni leaders say they can live with him.

The backing of the Sunni leaders is vital because of the support insurgents draw from the minority community. *Reuters*

**SRI LANKAN** wails at seeing the remains of her nephew killed by gunmen days after Tamil rebels pulled out of peace talks. AP

# *Sri Lankans, hit by war, tsunami, flee new violence*

By Peter Apps

KANNIYA, SRI LANKA—CHELAIAH SUNralachumi fled her home twice and lost her husband and two children in Sri Lanka's two-decade civil war.

Then, the 2004 tsunami devastated her refugee camp and she moved once again.

Now, the 60-year-old woman is again heading back into the jungles of northeast Sri Lanka, fleeing new violence that is shattering relations between ethnic Sinhalese and Tamil communities and threatens the island's 2002 ceasefire.

"Where else to go?" she asked Reuters in her native Tamil language, tears running down her cheeks. "I've left my home three times in a row. What is the point of living here?"

Exact numbers are hard to come by and change daily, but aid workers and officials say several thousand people have fled their homes after suspected Tamil Tiger rebel attacks were followed by ethnic clashes.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), whose two-decade fight for a Tamil homeland has killed some 64,000 people on both sides, deny recent attacks on troops. But it is almost impossible to find anyone who believes them.

Whatever the aim of the attacks in the fragile northeast where Tamils, Muslims and the majority Sinhalese live side by side, they have only ramped up ethnic tension.

Diplomats say they have almost given up hope that talks in Switzerland between the Tigers and government, once scheduled for last week and now postponed indefinitely, will ever take place. The peace process seems completely deadlocked, they say.

In Chelaiah's village, Kanniya, on the outskirts of the northeastern port town of Trincomalee, the turning point was when 16-year-old Pukiyarusu Baskaran disappeared on Friday.

The military denies involvement in the incident, but local Tamil residents say they heard screams coming from a nearby army camp. The next day the teenager was found on the road, shot in the head and covered in blood.

"We don't like the LTTE attacking the military," said Methodist minister Fr. Sylvester Terence outside the Baskaran family home, a corrugated iron and mud shelter that has been their home since the civil war.

"We don't like people dying. But this drives people to the LTTE. There is no one else supporting the Tamils."

Baskaran's mother wailed over the body at the hut's entrance, while neighbors packed their belongings to leave.

The nearby village of Nadasapuram is already empty.

Residents fled after a Sinhalese mob burnt several homes following suspected LTTE attacks near Trincomalee several days ago.

The houses, some still being built to resettle those displaced in the war, stand deserted. Some are burnt, others abandoned, belongings strewn inside. A few policemen, soldiers, cattle, chickens and dogs are all that remain.

Most of those who flee their homes end up in school buildings. At Varathayanagar, some 20 km west of Trincomalee, there are already some 650 people, aid workers say.

Food, water and other aid supplies are getting through, some diverted from the post-tsunami effort after violence rose sharply two weeks ago. More than 100 people sleep in a room smaller than a tennis court, but no one wants to leave. *Reuters*

WHY THE TIDE HAS TURNED

In every village, town and province, the Filipino people have raised a collective voice that rings across the land with an unmistakable demand: it is time to amend the Constitution; it is time to change the structure of government and shift to a parliamentary system and a one-house Parliament. It is time to put an end to gridlock, fighting between senators and congressmen and between the Senate and Malacañang, which only a unicameral parliamentary system could cure; it is time to do away with coup attempts and destabilization, and dirty, destructive and poisonous politics.

Support for the People's Initiative to amend the Charter has jumped from 20 percent six months ago to 43 percent in recent weeks. *Sigaw ng Bayan* continues to gather the signatures of millions more of Filipinos who seek constitutional reform as the last hope of the nation.

Influential business organizations, major labor and civil society groups, and all the leagues of local officials nationwide have joined in this chorus for change!

Business backs initiative
MANILA STANDARD TODAY, THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2006

The **Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry** (PCCI),headed by Donald Dee, and the **Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry**, led by Francis Chua—both with a combined membership of 10 million workers and employees nationwide.

TUCP: Cha-cha will reinvigorate economy
THE PHILIPPINE STAR, SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2006

The **Trade Union Congress of the Philippines** (TUCP) with one million members—the largest, most respected labor union in the country, led by Democrito Mendoza.

Labor leader urges Charter reforms to create more jobs
MANILA BULLETIN, SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2006

Charter reform will trigger an inflow of foreign investments, which our country needs to build thousands of factories and millions of jobs—says **TUCP**'s Alexander Aguilar.

Protestant churches join people's initiative
MANILA BULLETIN, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2006

The **Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches** (PCEC) with 2 million adult members and 20,000 churches, headed by Bishop Efraim Tendero and Bishop Federico Magbanua.

"We see the people's initiative as a valid expression of the people," says Bishop Tendero, who feels Charter reform is highly relevant today.

SIGNATURE DRIVE FOR CHA-CHA
Ulap joins initiative petition
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2006

The **Union of Local Authorities of the Philipppines** (ULAP), with 1.8 million members and local government officials, headed by Gov. Erico Aumentado, composed of the following: **League of Provinces** (79 provinces), headed by Gov. Aumentado; **League of Cities** (115 cities), headed by City Mayor Jerry Trenas; **League of Municipalities** (1,500 towns), headed by Mayor Ramon Guico; **League of Board Members**; **League of Vice Mayors**; **League of Councilors** and **League of Barangay Councils** with their 1.7 million barangay officials, tanod, barangay health workers, councilmen, and lupong pampayapa.

☑ Ang Sigaw ng Bayan:
Yes! to People's Initiative

ADVT.

# The WORLD

*Editor* **Luverne B. Gueco**

# Osama calls for prolonged war in Sudan

DUBAI—AL-QAIDA LEADER OSAMA BIN LADEN called on Muslim fighters to go to Sudan to wage war against "crusader thieves," according to a new audiotape attributed to him that aired on Sunday.

Bin Laden also slammed the Darfur conflict and the international isolation of the Hamas-led Palestinian government as proof of a "war by crusaders and Zionists against Islam" in the tape broadcast by Qatar-based Al-Jazeera television.

It was the first purported recording by the Western world's most wanted man in three months but its authenticity could not be verified and it was not clear when it was made.

In the last audiotape attributed to Bin Laden in January, he threatened new attacks against the United States but also offered the American people a conditional "truce."

That tape marked the first time Bin Laden had been heard from in more than a year but there was still no information about the whereabouts of the man behind the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and a host of other terror strikes.

In Sunday's tape, he called upon Muslim fighters to prepare for a prolonged war in Darfur, in his first reference in the media to Sudan, his base before he fled to the Taliban-controlled Afghanistan in the late 1990s.

"I call upon the mujahedeen (holy warriors) and their supporters in Sudan and its surroundings—including the Arabian Peninsula—to prepare to lead a prolonged war against the crusader robbers in western Sudan," he said.

About 300,000 people have been killed and more than two million forced from their homes in Darfur since 2003 in fighting between rebels and militias backed by government forces. The crisis is one of the continent's worst humanitarian tragedies.

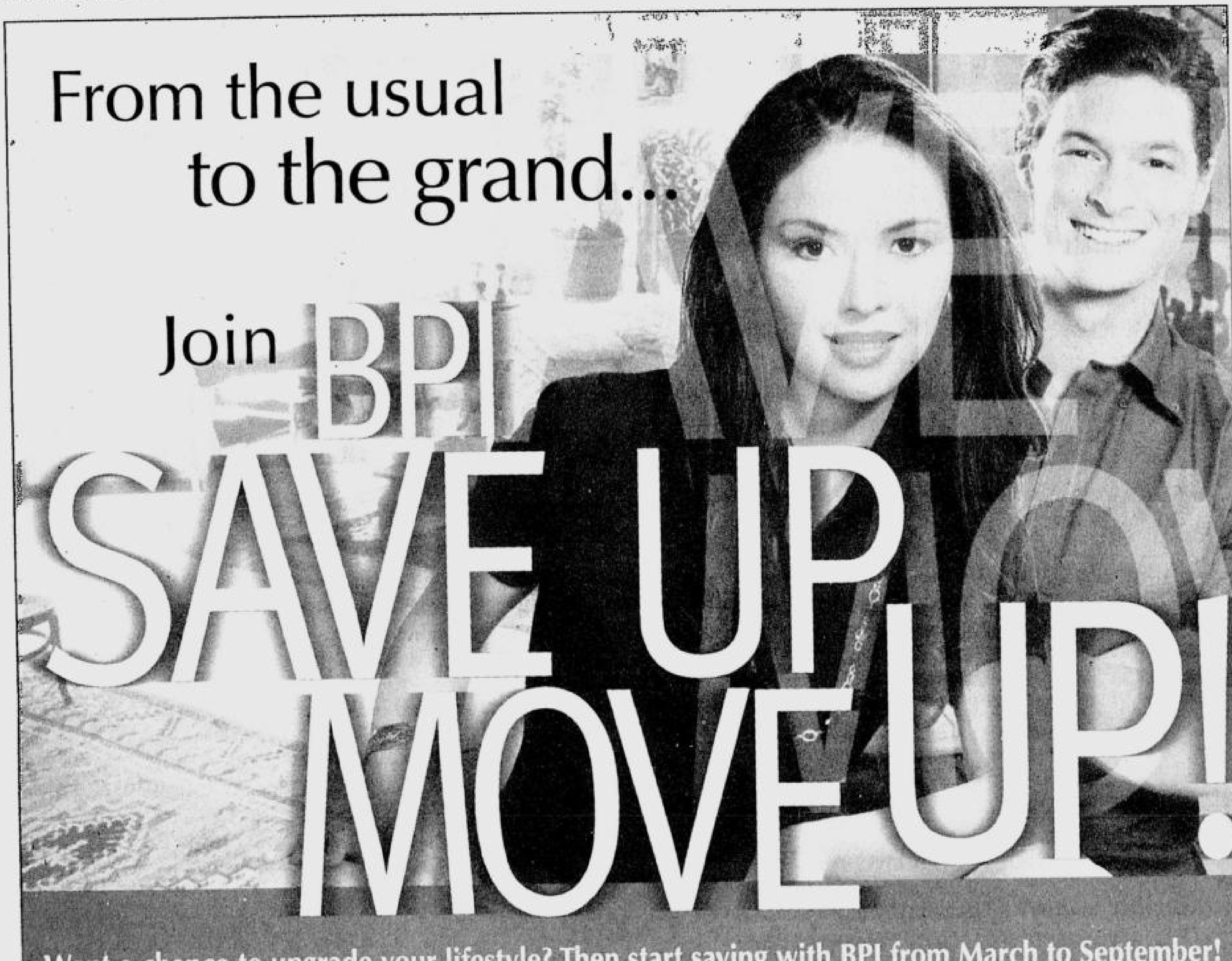
"Our aim is clear, which is to defend Islam, as well as its land and people, and not to defend the government of Khartoum, even if we share common interests," Bin Laden added, in reference to the Islamist government that has been in power since a 1989 coup.

The African Union is currently engaged in a diplomatic effort to bring peace to Darfur and has deployed a 7,000-strong force there. But the mission has been plagued by financial problems.

Bin Laden also criticized the Western isolation of Hamas since it took power in the Palestinian territories last month, leading to a cut in vital aid from donors such as the United States and the European Union.

"Their rejection of Hamas after it had won the election... confirms that there is a crusader-Zionist war against Muslims," he said.

Bin Laden also urged Muslims to boycott products of Western countries, including the United States, which backed Denmark following the publication of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad, Al-Jazeera said. *AFP*



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**PRODEMOCRACY** protesters lie injured after riot policemen baton charged them, within a mile from the royal Narayanhiti Palace in Katmandu, Nepal, April 22. AP

## Groups provide advice, support to US illegals

WHEN MULUGETA YIMER, A TAXI DRIVER from Ethiopia, thought his employer was cheating him several years ago, he did not complain to the government; he went instead to a worker center called Tenants and Workers United.

The center helped Yimer and other drivers in Alexandria, Va., win the right to keep more of their fares. Not only that, it has helped child care workers win a 70-percent raise and day laborers win back pay for minimum-wage violations.

Tenants and Workers United is one of a fast-growing number of centers that are helping the nation's 20 million immigrant workers. In many ways, these centers are doing what labor unions, fraternal organizations and settlement houses did decades ago for newcomers to the United States.

"We are all from different countries, and our English is broken and nobody understands us," said Yimer, who has driven a taxi for eight years. "But the workers center was willing to listen to us. They provide us expertise. They provide us a lawyer. They support us."

There are more than 140 worker centers nationwide, up from roughly 25 a decade ago. The centers played a pivotal role in getting tens of thousands of workers to the giant demonstrations seeking a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants and protesting a House bill that would turn illegal immigrants into felons.

Many illegal immigrants—day laborers, gardeners, laundry workers, restaurant deliverymen—have asked these centers for help on wage problems because the nation's legal services offices are barred from representing them. Moreover, the centers often fill the role once held by labor unions, which represent less than 6 percent of low-wage workers.

The centers teach immigrants English and how to file wage complaints. They have persuaded communities to build shelters for day laborers, who often stand in the rain and cold without bathroom facilities. They have helped push for higher minimum wages in several states, and some centers have won more than $1 million in back pay for immigrants who were cheated.

Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a group that supports stricter immigration controls, voiced ambivalence about these centers.

"The bad part is these groups become lobbies for illegal aliens," Krikorian said. "On the other hand, they help people stiffed out of their wages. That can serve a purpose because it raises the price of hiring illegal aliens, and the more it costs to hire illegal aliens, the more employers might turn to legal workers." NYT

SPORTS
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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
**Text us your feedback:** inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

**SUERTRES** 0 4 2
**EZ2** 20 6
(In exact order)

**SUPERLOTTO 6/49**
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# Beermen notch 7th straight win

**By June Navarro**

**SAN MIGUEL'S DANNY SEIGLE seems to find Talk 'N Text an easy assignment.**

Seigle, the Gran Matador-PBA Philippine Cup's leading scorer, poured in 10 of his 27 points in the deciding period last night and led the Beermen to a 105-99 repeat over the Phone Pals at the Araneta Coliseum.

The 6-foot-7 scoring machine, who also sparkled in SMB's first round romp over the Phone Pals, anchored the decisive run that extended the Beermen's impressive victory string to seven games.

Dorian Peña had another double-double

BEERMEN/ A36

**GAMES WEDNESDAY** *(Araneta Coliseum)*
4:40 p.m.—Red Bull vs Sta. Lucia; 7:35 p.m.—Ginebra vs Purefoods

# Junior World q'fying

AFTER A FIVE-DAY break, the qualifying tournament for the Callaway Junior World Championships resumes at the Canlubang north and Riviera executive courses tomorrow with exciting finishes expected in the higher divisions.

Jikjik Abdon tries to protect a four-stroke lead over Mico Yee in boys' Class A he built at Sherwood Hills while in the distaff side, Bambee dela Paz is just a shot ahead of reigning Philippine Ladies Open champ Debbie de Villa and Crystal Superal.

A total of 160 jungolfers are playing in the 108-qualifier to the Junior World this coming July in San Diego, California.

The other sponsors of the tourney include the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Titliest, Mizuno, La Jolla, Taylor Made, Wilson, Ping, Auto Magic, Unilever, MMCI Air Liquid, INQUIRER Golf and Michael Guy.

The standings:

Class A: Boys—213 Jikjik Abdon 75-70-68, 217 Mico Yee 74-73-70, 222 Miko Alejandro 72-73-77; Girls—234 Bambee dela Paz 77-75-82, 235 Debbie de Villa 81-77-77, 235 Crystal Superal 83-81-71

Class B (13-14): Boys—234 Wolen Superal 74-76-84, 242 Carlos Tinio 81-82-79, 248 Marcel Puyat 79-82-87; Girls—234 Mia Piccio 75-79-80, 234 Regine de Guzman 83-74-77, 235 Cyna Rodriguez 76-75-84

Class C (11-12): Boys—231 Miguel Tabuena 76-79-76, 233 Remo Fueg 79-76-78, 253 Bino dela Paz 88-80-85;

Class D (9-10): Boys—219 JR Gonzales 69-79-71, 224 AR Ramos 76-76-72, 225 Miggy Yee 76-72-77; Girls—249 Princess Superal 85-81-83, 274 Daniella Uy 86-94-94, 280 Felicia Medalla 96-94-90

Class E: Boys—185 Rupert Zaragosa 65-61-59, 190 Justin Dy 67-63-60, 205 Jelbert Gamolo 66-70-69; Girls—201-Rachita Vasandani 69-62-70, 201 Mia Legaspi 67-72-62

Class F: Boys—198 Shailesh Vasandani 58-74-66, 219 Ryan Monsalve 78-68-72, 286 Mikael Robles 95-94-97; Girls—256 Chloe Reyes 82-84-90, 260 Kristine Turralba 87-93-80, 285 Ashia Mari Nocum 91-97-97

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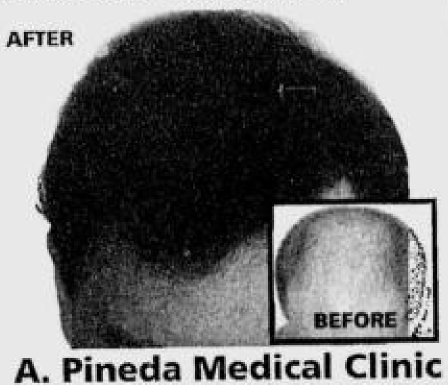

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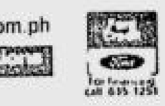
chrome exhaust tip

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# Sparks climb out of 23-point hole

**GAMES TOMORROW (San Andres Gym, Malate)**
2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs. Magnolia Ice Cream
4 p.m.—Montaña Pawnshop vs. Rain or Shine

By Francis Ochoa

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO HOLE the Toyota Otis Sparks cannot climb out of.

Faced with a 23-point deficit, the Sparks leaned on the heroics of Boyet Bautista to squeeze out a thrilling 82-80 victory over hard-luck TeleTech to grab solo second at the start of the second round of the 2006 PBL Unity Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center.

Bautista spearheaded the Sparks' gutsy comeback that saw Toyota register its biggest come-from-behind win en route to its sixth victory in eight starts.

But it wasn't the only comeback Toyota has fashioned out so far.

In the first round, the Sparks also crawled out of a 20-point hole to pip Montaña Pawnshop.

In this latest show of never-say-die spirit, Bautista helped seal the victory with a pinpoint assist to Joe Devance, who converted the game-winning basket in the final seven seconds.

In the second game, Granny Goose hammered Hapee-PCU, 66-54, to improve to 4-4.

With JR Quiñahan imposing his will inside the paint, the Snackmasters sent the Teethmasters to a 3-5 slate.

Devance topscored for the Sparks with 27 points on 12-of-19 shooting from the field and chipped in nine boards and two assists. Bautista wound up with 16 points.

Jose Rizal product Marco Fajardo also contributed a rare four-point play that jump-started the Sparks' blistering third-quarter rally.

**The scores:**

**First Game**

**TOYOTA OTIS 82**—Devance 27, Bautista 16, Andaya 8, Casio 7, Fajardo 7, Aldave 6, Daa 4, Aban 4, Larong 2, Coronel 1, Rodriguez 0, Oreta 0, Cabahug 0.

**TELETECH 80**—Gelig 16, Latoreno 14, Sierra 8, Mercado 8, Capus 7, Tang 6, Magdadaro 5, Tolentino 5, Duncil 4, Estrada 4, Doruelo 3.

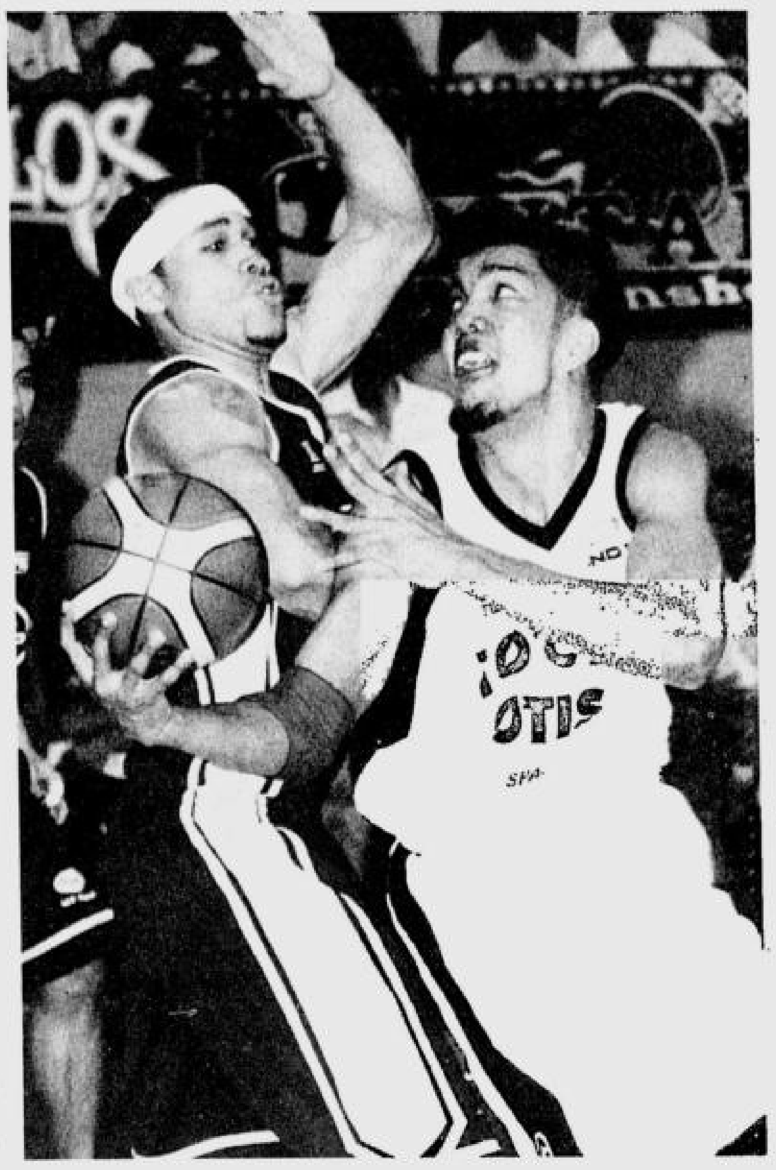
**Quarters:** 15-25, 26-47, 49-61, 82-80.

**Second Game**

**GRANNY GOOSE 66**—Latonio 16, Quinahan 13, Ibanes 12, Grijaldo 8, Saldua 4, Alfad 4, Cruz 4, Dela Pena 2, Santos 2, Ferrer 1, Concha 0, Chua 0.

**HAPEE-PCU 54**—Solis 10, Castro 9, Belga 8, Moreno 6, Sanz 5, Garrido 3, Espinas 3, Bucao 2, Gonzales 2, Razon 2, Guevarra 2, Canlas 2, Nallon 0, Baculi 0.

**Quarters:** 17-4, 27-20, 46-32, 65-34.



**BIG MAN** Mark Andaya (right) of Toyota Otis challenges Kelly Williams of Magnolia in this file photo. The Sparks nipped Teletech yesterday in another come-from-behind performance.

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# M. Lhuillier overwhelms West Negros Mustangs

THE M. LHUILLIER KWARTA PADALA-CEBU City Jewelers dug deep at crunchtime to repulse the gritty Talisay City-West Negros College Mustangs, 95-81, and keep their unbeaten record intact in the ML Kwarta Padala Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVBA) First Conference on Saturday night at the Cebu Coliseum.

The Jewelers of businessman-sportsman Michel Lhuillier and head coach Raul "Yayoy" Alcoseba struggled most of the way but caught fire towards the end, holding the visiting Mustangs to only four points in the final seven minutes to firm up their hold of the lead with a clean 5-0 slate.

Unlike in their previous loss to the MLSDF-Mantawi Traders, the visiting Mustangs were in fighting mood this time as they overhauled an 11-point deficit late in the first canto and even led on several occasions including at 48-47 at halftime.

West Negros had its last taste of the lead at 73-72 with 1:20 left in the third period as Alano Caputolan hit two free throws. But Niñc Ramirez scored on an acrobatic layup to give the Jewelers a 76-73 edge entering the final period.

The Mustangs last threatened at 77-80 before Jayford Rodriguez, Woodrow Enriquez and Stephen Padilla presided over a game-closing 15-4 assault by M. Lhuillier.

Rodriguez finished with 18 points and four other Jewelers scored in double figures to nullify a 33-point performance by Mustang Ely Orate, who matched his league record.

The league is backed by ML Kwarta Padala, Cokaliong Shipping Lines, Molten, Nature's Spring Drinking Water, Panasonic, and Sulpicio Lines.

**The scores:**

**M. LHUILLIER 95**—Rodriguez 18, Enriquez 15, Padilla 14, Llanto 10, Aying 10, Caputolan 6, Ramirez 6, Tangarorang 4, Mepaña 4, Manigo 4, Ocañada 4.

**WEST NEGROS 81**—Olarte 33, Vergara 17, Tizon 12, Espiritu 6, Suarte 5, Deocadis 4, Dapar 2, Quilantang 2.

**Quarters:** 21-15,47-48, 76-73, 95-81

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## TV GUIDE

Monday, April 24, 2006

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| Channel | 2:30PM | 3:00PM | 3:30PM | 4:00PM | 4:30PM | 5:00PM | 5:30PM | 6:00PM | 6:30PM | 7:00PM | 7:30PM | 8:00PM | 8:30PM | 9:00PM | 9:30PM | 10:00PM | 10:30PM | 11:00PM | 11:30PM |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ABC 5 | | | WNCAA (Rerun) | National Geographic | Speed | | TNA Impact | | Sentro | How Clean Is Your House | ABC Action Movies | | | | Big News | Fear Factor | | Toloo TV | |
| ABS-CBN 2 | Kapamilya Cinema | | | Pasion de Amor | Little Amy | Mr. Bean | Naruto | Outstanding Twins | TV Patrol World | | Gulong Ng Palad | Sa Piling Mo | Panday | Wonderful Life | | OK Fine! Whatever | | | Insider |
| AXN | | The Net | | | | | E Buzz | Sakura Wars | Sakura Wars | PSI Factor (Season III) | | Sports Disaster VI | | The World's Most Shocking Moments Caught On Tape | | Lost (Season II) | | House | |
| Cartoon Network | Police Academy | Richie Rich | Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi | Tom & Jerry Show | Baby Looney Tunes | Codename: Kids Next Door | | | | Power Rangers Wild Force | | Yu-Gi-Oh Double Duel | | | | Mucha Lucha! | Duck Dodgers | Justice League | Samurai Jack |
| Cinema One | | Prinsesang Gusgusin | | | | Miguel/Michelle | | | | Singles | | | | Akin Ang Pangarap Mo | | | | Alas Dose | |
| Cinemax | And Justice For All (2:45 PM) | | | | | Curse Of The Werewolf | | | Beethoven (6:35 PM) | | | Paris Trout | | | Freddy vs. Jason (9:40 PM) | | | King Ralph (11:10 PM) | |
| CNN | | Business International | | World News | World Sport | Larry King Live | | Business International | World Sport | World News Asia | | World News | World Sport | World News Asia | Man Sai | Your World Today | | | |
| Crime/Suspense | | What Should You Do? | | Law & Order: Special Victims Unit | | Profiler | | Forensic Files | Mastermind | Law & Order | | Law & Order: Special Victims Unit | | Crossing Jordan | | Bones | | The Closer | |
| Discovery Channel | | | | Monster Garage | | Unstoppable Wave | | | | Australia - A Natural History | | Life Unlimited | | Raising The Kursk | | I Shouldn't Be Alive | | The FBI Files | |
| Disney Channel | Mr. Bean, The Animated Series | Totally Spies | Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny | Mickey Mouse and Friends | Lilo & Stitch | Martin Mystery | Totally Spies | Kim Possible | Mr. Bean, The Animated Series | That's So Raven, That's So Trendy Week | Wonderful World Of Disney | | | Black Hole High | So Little Time | Mickey Mouse and Friends | Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers | Wonderful World Of Disney | |
| ESPN | | Pro Billiards '05 Men's Int'l Challenge of Champs | | Pool World Pool Masters 2001 | | Asian X Games '05 Presented by Kia | Asian X Games '05 Presented by Kia | Extreme Programming Sports Mania | | Atlantic Coast Conf. Basketball: Duke Vs Florida State | | Sportscenter Asia | | Sportscenter Asia | LPGA Golf Fields Open in Hawaii 3rd Rd | | | | Sportscenter Asia |
| ETC | | America's Next Top Model 4 | | Change of Heart | Elimidate | Blind Date | Fifth Wheel | Seinfeld | Ambush Makeover | The Tyra Banks Show | | Project Runway | | Queer Eye For The Straight Guy | | America's Next Top Model 4 | | ET Weekend | |
| ETC 2nd Avenue | | Starting Over | | The Maury Povich Show | | The Jerry Springer Show | | Dr. Phil | | NBC Nightly News | The Inside Edition | The Ellen Show | | Wheel Of Fortune | Jeopardy | The Biggest Loser | | NBC Nightly News | The Inside Edition |
| EWTN | Benediction And Devotion | Angelus (3:15 PM) | Bible Treasure Chest | Image Of God | Rosary With Mother Angelica | EWTN Gallery | G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle Of Common Sense II | Threshold Of Hope | | Sunday Night Live With [Enquire] Fr. Benedict Groeschel | | Daily Mass Live | | Angelus (9:15 PM) | Good Or Evil, Who Decides? | The Gospel Of John | Freedom & Authority | Catholic Compass | |
| Fox News | | Fox Report Sunday | | Beltway Boys | Fox News Watch | Bulls & Bears | Cavuto On Business | Forbes On Fox | Cashin' In | Fox & Friends | | | | | | Fox News Live | | | |
| GMA 7 | Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako | Now and Forever | First Love Of A Royal Prince | | Dragonball Z | Great Teacher Onizuka | La Robe de Mariage | 24 Oras | | Extra Challenge | Majika | Encantadia | My Name Is Kim Sam Soon | Jewel In The Palace | | Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita | | | Saksi |
| Hallmark Channel | | Child Of Our Time 2002 | | Annie's Point (4:15 PM) | | | | Bewitched | The Nanny | Family Law III | | Missing II | | Judging Amy | | Empire | | | Judging Amy (11:45 PM) |
| HBO | | Big Fish (3:15 PM) | | | | | McHale's Navy | | | | First Impact (7:20 PM) | | | Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy | | | Iron Jawed Angels | | |
| Hero TV | Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters | Yakitate! Japan | Mr. Ajikko | D.I.C.E. | Samurai Deeper Kyo | Gamburagar | Gosaurer | Raijin-Oh | Beyblade G-Revolution | Yu-Gi-Oh GX | Naruto | Mirmo de Pon | Inuyasha | Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters | Yakitate! Japan | Mr. Ajikko | D.I.C.E. | Samurai Deeper Kyo | Gosaurer |
| IBC 13 | | EZ Shop | | | | Home Shopping Network | IBC Express Balita | Kruseda Kontra Krimen | | Home Shopping Network | | ME TV | | PTA Best Of The Philippines | | Global Family Series | IBC News Tonite | Home Shopping Network | |
| JackTV | The Daily Show With Jon Stewart | The Late Show David Letterman | | Bottomline | | Afterburn | | X-Men Evolution | Beat The Geeks | Mad TV | | | Family Guy | The Late Show David Letterman | | Jack In The Box | | | |
| Lifestyle Network | Country Style | 30 Minute Meals | Wolfgang Puck | Sweet Dreams | Interiors By Design | Decorating With Style | Decorating Cents | Barefoot Contessa | Everyday Italian | Hot Off The Grill | E! Extra Celebrity Adventures | | NY Fashion Week | Martha | | Radical Sabbatical | Genuine Article | How Do I Look | |
| MTV Philippines | | Wildboyz | | All Eyes on Jay-Z and Nas | Pop Inc | | 2006 MAA Nominee Specials | MTV Hits | | Get Spotted | Homecoming | Massive | MTV Hits | TRL | | Wildboyz | | MTV Hits | Brand New |
| MYX | | Rock MYX | My MYX | Mellow MYX | Urban MYX | Take 5 | MYXILOG | MYX Firsts | Star MYX | OPM MYX | Pop MYX | MYX Daily Top Ten | | Mobile MYX | Top Picks | Urban MYX | My MYX | MYX Backtrax | MYXILOG |
| National Geographic | Wild Family Secrets | National Geographic Specials | | Showreel Asia | | The Living Edens: Bhutan, Last Shangri-La | | Top 5 - About China | | Wow! Walking With Lions | | About Asia | | National Geographic Specials | | Showreel Asia | | The Living Edens: Palau, Paradise of The Pacific | |
| NBN | | Teledyaryo Alas-Tres | | Teledyaryo Sports Alas | Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila? | Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo | | Tinig ng Bayan (Live) | | | | Teledyaryo Final Edition | | Dial M | | Bantay OCW With Susan K | | | |
| Nickelodeon | Chalkzone | Hey Arnold! | SpongeBob SquarePants | My Life As A Teenage Robot | All Grown Up | The Adventures Jimmy Neutron | The Fairly Odd Parents | Drake & Josh | Naturally Sadie | Romeo | All That | All Grown Up | As Told By Ginger | Four Eyes | SpongeBob SquarePants | The Adventures Jimmy Neutron | The Fairly Odd Parents | My Dad The Rock Star | |
| PBO | | | Pasugo Ng Kahapon | | Pusong [illegible] Mabangis | | | | Sa Kabila Ng Lahat | | | | Wanted Perfect Mother | | | | Keka | | |
| Qtv | Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin | | Zenki | Kaleido Star | MMS (My Music Station) | | Moms | | Love At Aegean Sea | Irene | Noel | Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit | H3O Hahaha ..Over | | News On Q | Liga Ng Kababaihan | | Irene | Over The Green Fields |
| RPN 9 | TV Shopping | | | | | Global Window | Arangkada Extra Balita | Entertainment Tonight | The Insider | Score Tactics | NBA On RPN | | | | | Newswatch Now | Just For Laughs | Cerge For Truth | |
| SBN 21 | | | | New Life TV Shopping | | | | Winner TV Shopping | | Quantum Global | | Oras Ng Himala | | Oras ng Kaliwanagan | | SBN Music Video | | | |
| Solar Sports | | Copenhagen Masters MudD Final | | | RP Mtn Bike Tour 2 | Swatch FIVB World Tour '05 Men's Final Espinho | | | | Sagupaan | | 2006 NBA Playoffs | | | | | Sportsdesk | Denmark Open Women's Singles SF | |
| Sports Plus | | Verizon Heritage Classic Highlights | | FIFA Preview Series 10 | Gloria World Cup Preview 8 | Ultimate Fighting Championship | | | | Arena Football League | | | | | | Shell Houston Open Final Rd | | | |
| Star Movies | | | | Nature Unleashed: Volcano | | | | Sister Act (5:50 PM) | | | All Dogs Go To Heaven (7:15 PM) | | | The Whole Ten Yards | | | Harley Davidson & The Marlboro Man | | |
| Star World | | The Bold & The Beautiful | | General Hospital | | Ed | | The Simpsons | Malcolm In The Middle | Star News Asia | Seinfeld | My Wife And Kids (Series 2) | Still Standing | King Of Queens | Frasier | Monk | | Seinfeld | My Wife And Kids (Series 2) |
| Studio 23 | | Masked Rider Ryuki | | | | Batman Beyond | Sports Report | Spirits | TBA | Wazzup Wazzup | The Bachelor Season 6 | | Charmed (8:20 PM) | Lost (9:10 PM) | | News Central | Miss Match | | Travel Time |

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

# Del Rosario rules Petron jet ski tilt

**SUBIC BAY—WORLD JET SKI RUNner-up Paul del Rosario proved he's still the best Filipino in the sport when he bagged three titles yesterday at the start of the 2006 Petron Jet Ski National Series at the Waterfront Beach here.**

Del Rosario first displayed endurance and grit as he ruled the four-lap Stand-Up Ski class over Networx teammate Carlo Garcia and perennial rival, 1997 National Champion John Dee.

Then he repeated over Garcia and newcomer JR Pineda in the Open Sport class of this event.

He capped his outstanding feat by topping the premiere Expert Open 1200 class, pulling ahead early in the eight-lap race to prevail over Dee and former novice champion BJ Ang.

Ang focused his energy in winning the Expert 800 Open over his more experienced rivals Excel Torres and third placer Harley David.

The kickoff leg conducted by the Jet Sports Association of the Philippines (JSAP) president Dong Arcilla and Race Director Sonny Yalung drew a huge crowd yesterday.

Topping the other classes were Dax Figueroa, Regine King and Myk Mangio Figueroa, one of the eight first-timers in the event presented by Petron and sponsored by SBMA, Networx Jetsports, Gerry's Grill, Courtyard Inn, Premiere Ready Mix, Atoy Body Kits, Alex Car Restoration Service, Subic Homes, Printing Images, Petron Lakeshore Toll Service Facility, HSD Iced Products, Cardams, Capones Bistro, Wild Man Adventure Sandals and Hizon Laboratories.

The next round is slated May 13. Active jet ski riders and new enthusiasts intending to compete in the national series can call up Networx Jetsports at tel. no. 413-3109 or may log on at www.networxjetsports.com.

**DEL ROSARIO** goes airborne in show of skill.

# Boxer Paderna swims to world-class stardom (Or what GMA missed at Baywalk on Friday)

**BARE EYE**

*Recah Trinidad*

KULARBDANG KIATKRERIN sounds like a mouth-watering Thai dish. He's not.

Jun Paderna defended his Pan Asian Boxing Association super featherweight title. He won but grabbed a rare crown.

It was a forgettable period that should mercifully be rated the most hilarious in Philippine boxing.

The Games and Amusements Board last week hosted an international convention built around a seminar on rules and regulations, an awards night and a stellar fight card hosted on Friday by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza at the Rajah Sulaiman Park, off the now world-famous Baywalk.

The main event featured the Kiatkrerin-Paderna super clash for the PABA super featherweight crown held by the Cebu-based slugger.

The fight was supposed to showcase a fine brand of Pinoy boxing, in the tradition of Manny Pacquiao, Brian Viloria and Boom Boom Bautista.

***

Paderna won by a mile in the cards of three international judges, including the vastly traveled Salven Lagumbay of the INQUIRER.

Raring for a knockout, the flat-footed Paderna stalked his handsome foe with the burning eyes of a cougar that hadn't devoured a rabbit for over a month.

He slammed, slashed, swung blindly for 12 rounds.

Paderna fought very hungry, thirsting for blood.

However, his winning effort was so wild it should have sent Paderna all the way to the shores of Cavite City had he instead jumped into the Manila Bay across the street, a few steps from the boxing ring.

Of course, the foreign reps to the international boxing convention had not seen anything of the sort before.

Paderna, a rarity, has just crowned himself the newest phenomenon in Philippine sports.

Here's one wonder boy that has retained an international boxing crown via a burning, muscular display of swimming skills inside the ring.

***

Naturally, Paderna got his belt, a green goldware wrapped around his waist to the reluctant applause of displeased spectators.

But before it's too late, we hereby recommend the winner and still champ for a separate award.

He should be handed the distinction as the swimming wonder of world boxing.

Hold it. This proposal should first be reviewed for approval by the main host, GAB chair Eric Buhain.

In case sports fans have forgotten, Buhain, son-in-law of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, was himself a national swimming hero two decades back and 30 pounds ago.

The Paderna win, indeed, was a new high for RP swimming.

Buhain, appearing quite fulfilled in a handsome brown suit, should be congratulated.

***

There were other reasons to rejoice.

The card itself, said to have cost P1.6 million, was not an out-and-out steal.

The sideshow, starring concert queen Pops Fernandez, classy songstress Jennifer Bautista, together with sultry native round dolls, was first class.

The local refs, headed by Ber Abainza and Ferdie Estrella, were first rate.

The judges were sharp, despite doing their chores for a song.

Oh, the Thai. He did not prove any better than a straying cook.

But despite checking in with the wan build of an undertaker, he survived 12-rounds of soggy, watery bombardment, his handsome hairdo intact.

You heard it. It was a slambang main event, so advised the Solar Sports commentators of the sleepy affair.

Thank you, sirs.

Thank you again, Sir Eric.

On the way to the Rumble by the Bay, centerpiece of the rehearsal for the forthcoming WBC Convention here, we discovered a new swimming hero.

Nothing could be rarer, truly world-class.

# 2nd Pasig non-master chess tournament up

CHESS WORKZ CHESS EVENTS Company will be staging the sequel to the biggest chess tournament in Pasig on Saturday, April 29, at the Atrium 2 of Ever Gotesco Ortigas Complex.

The second Pasig Non-Master chess tournament is open to untitled players—all ages and sexes—beginners, unrated, and rated players with ratings not over 2050. The format will be a seven-round Swiss with 25 minutes time control.

The regular registration fee is P250.

A cash prize of P15,000 awaits the top players. For more information contact Chess Workz at 901-0910, Mark 0917-8506220, or Benedict 0922-3789493.

Visit the website at http://hkt.port5.com/chessworkz for more information.

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Republic of the Philippines
**REGIONAL TRIAL COURT**
National Capital Judicial Region
Branch 87, Quezon City

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR JUDICIAL RECONSTITUTION OF THE ORIGINAL AND DUPLICATE OWNER'S COPIES OF TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE OVER LOT 41-C-3-A PSD-30029 (R3-00-001200) LOCATED IN QUEZON CITY**

LRC Case No. Q-20521 (05)

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CENTER ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE represented by HON. LUCILLE P. ORTILE, in her capacity as Secretary General of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council,
Petitioner.
x-----------------------------------------------x

## ORDER

A verified petition having been filed by the NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CENTER ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (NGCAC for brevity) for Judicial Reconstruction of the original and duplicate owner's copies of TCT over lot 41-C-3-A, PSD-30029 (RS-00-001200) located in Quezon City alleges the following:

"1. Petitioner NGCAC is a sovereign political entity with capacity to sue. It is herein represented by the Honorable Lucille P. Ortile, the Undersecretary and Secretary General of HUDCC, of legal age, Filipino, with capacity to sue and be sued in such capacity, with office address at the 6th Floor, Atrium Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

2. Based on Section 5 of the Republic Act No. 9207 (R.A. 9207), also known as the *"National Government Center (NGC) Housing and Land Utilization Act of 2003,"* the NGCAC is *"mandated to administer, formulate guidelines and policies, and implement the land disposition of the areas covered"* by the said Act, particularly the 184-hectare NGC West Side property and the 238-hectare NGC East Side property. Further, the Act provides that the Chairperson of HUDCC shall head the NGCAC. A copy of RA 9207 is hereto attached as **Annex "A"**.

3. Pursuant thereto and by virtue of its mandate, the Chairperson of HUDCC is under the obligation to file petition herein in order to protect the interest of the Republic of the Philippines by ensuring the reconstitution of the title in the latter's name and henceforth, to distribute the same among the beneficiaries of in accordance with R.A. 9207. The mandate of the Chairperson of HUDCC finds further support in a Resolution dated 24 August 2005 issued by the Administrative Committee authorizing the Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Noli L. De Castro to file herein petition. A copy of Resolution dated 1 September 2005 is hereto attached as Annex "B".

4. And by virtue of the authority vested upon by the Chairperson of HUDCC, herein representative Hon. Lucile P. Ortile, was duly designated as the authorized representative of NGCAC for the purpose of filing this petition as clearly stated in an Office Order dated 23 September 2005, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "C"**.

5. The NGC West Side and East Side, properties used to form part of the 444-hectare NGC reservation under Proclamation No. 1826 dated 5 March 1979, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "D"**. The 150-hectare NGC West Side property was excluded from the NGC reservation under Proclamation No. 1826 pursuant to Proclamation No. 137 dated 11 August 1987, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "E"**. On the other hand, the 238-hectare NGC East Side property was excluded from the NGC reservation under Proclamation No. 1826 pursuant to Proclamation No. 1169 dated 6 April 1998, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "F"**. On 17 March 2003, R.A. 9207 was signed into law, amending Proclamation No. 1826.

6. Part of the aforesaid 238-hectare NGC East Side property is the **Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029**, which has an area of **1,294,462** square meters, more or less, and located at Constitutional Hills, Quezon City. The technical descriptions of Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029, upon resurvey under RS-00-001200, is as follows:

"TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
(NATIONAL GOVERNMENT CENTER)
(RS-00-001200)

A PARCEL OF LAND (as described on resurvey plan RA-00-001200, being a resurvey of Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029, LRA Record No.), situated in Brgy. Of Constitution Hill, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Island of Luzon.

Bounded on the NW. & NE., along lines 1 to 21 by Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029 (Before) Doña Juana Subdivision (Now) Pcs-3088; on the NE., along line 2122 by Lot 40, along line 22-23 by Lot 39, both of Psu-32606; on the SE., along line 23-24 by Lot 38, Psu-32606 (Before) Dolor's Subdivison (Now) Pcs-2874; along lines 24 to 38 by Lot 41-3-C-E, Psd-30039 (Before) Doña Juana Subdivision Psd-34147 (Now); along line 38-40 by Lot 41-C-3-D; on the SW., along lines 46-46 by Lot 41-C-3-C; along line 46-47 by Lot 41-C-3-B, all of Psd-30029, on the W., along lines 47 to 70 by Lot 41-C-3-G, Psd-30029 (Before) Doña Juana Subdivision (LRC) Psd-3047 (Now); along line 70-71 by Lot 41-C-3-G, Psd-30029 (Before) Proposed Republic Avenue Road. Lot Psd-34147 (Now); along lines 71 to 83 by Lots 1 to 5 by Psd-34147, on the NW., along line 8384 by Lot 41-C-2-R, Psd-23692 (Luzon Investment 8s Devt. Co.); along line 84-85 by Lot 41-C-2-Y, Psd-23692; along line 85-1 by Lot 41-C-3-F, Psd-30029 (Before) Doña Juana Subdivision (Now) Psc-3038. Beginning at a point marked "1" on Plan, being S. 60 deg. 03W., 6952.00 m. from BLLM No.1 Map of Montalban, Rizal, thence

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| N. 75 deg. 50'E., | 11.68 m. to pt. 02; | N. 75 deg. 55'W., | 11.71 m. to pt. 45; |
| N. 79 deg. 08'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 03; | N. 74 deg. 30'W., | 203.44 m. to pt. 46; |
| N. 83 deg. 28'E., | 19.97 m. to pt. 04; | N. 74 deg. 31'W., | 95.11 m. to pt. 47; |
| N. 87 deg. 49'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 05; | N. 18 deg. 23'W., | 3.86 m. to pt. 48; |
| S. 87 deg. 52'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 06; | N. 17 deg. 11'E., | 17.94 m. to pt. 49; |
| S. 83 deg. 29'E., | 20.01 m. to pt. 07; | N. 16 deg. 01'E., | 17.95 m. to pt. 50; |
| S. 79 deg. 10'E., | 19.98 m. to pt. 08; | N. 14 deg. 48'E., | 17.94 m. to pt. 51; |
| S. 74 deg. 55'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 09; | N. 13 deg. 29'E., | 17.92 m. to pt. 52; |
| S. 70 deg. 33'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 10; | N. 12 deg. 15'E., | 17.95 m. to pt. 53; |
| S. 66 deg. 13'E., | 20.01 m. to pt. 11; | N. 11 deg. 02'E., | 17.95 m. to pt. 54; |
| S. 61 deg. 59'E., | 19.99 m. to pt. 12; | N. 09 deg. 46'E., | 17.92 m. to pt. 55; |
| S. 57 deg. 31'E., | 19.98 m. to pt. 13; | N. 08 deg. 32'E., | 17.93 m. to pt. 56; |
| S. 53 deg. 15'E., | 19.99 m. to pt. 14; | N. 07 deg. 22'E., | 17.96 m. to pt. 57; |
| S. 48 deg. 57'E., | 20.00 m. to pt. 15; | N. 05 deg. 55'E., | 17.95 m. to pt. 58; |
| S. 45 deg. 50'E., | 8.09 m. to pt. 16; | N. 04 deg. 53'E., | 17.95 m. to pt. 59; |
| S. 45 deg. 50'E., | 188.48 m. to pt. 17; | N. 03 deg. 33'E., | 17.93 m. to pt. 60; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'E., | 188.76 m. to pt. 18; | N. 02 deg. 16'E., | 17.91 m. to pt. 61; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'E., | 25.00 m. to pt. 19; | N. 01 deg. 05'E., | 17.94 m. to pt 62; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'E., | 231.32 m. to pt. 20; | N. 00 deg. 13'E., | 6.56 m. to pt. 63; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'E., | 43.77 m. to pt. 21; | DUE NORTH | 105.01 m. to pt. 64; |
| S. 27 deg. 55'W., | 43.77 m. to pt. 22; | DUE WEST | 15.00 m. to pt. 65; |
| S. 19 deg. 08'E., | 254.39 m. to pt. 23; | DUE NORTH | 170.01 m. to pt. 66; |
| S. 17 deg. 39'W., | 320.58 m. to pt. 24; | DUE WEST | 12.50 m. to pt. 67; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'W., | 205.06 m. to pt. 25; | DUE NORTH | 87.00 m. to pt. 68; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'W., | 25.00 m. to pt. 26; | DUE WEST | 12.00 m. to pt. 69; |
| S. 45 deg. 00'W., | 188.75 m. to pt. 27; | N. 44 deg. 58'W., | 53.64 m. to pt. 70; |
| S. 44 deg. 59'W., | 188.76 m. to pt. 28; | N. 00 deg. 02'E., | 139.98 m. to pt. 71; |
| S. 46 deg. 08'W., | 8.13 m. to pt. 29; | N. 45 deg. 00'E., | 53.72 m. to pt. 72; |
| S. 48 deg. 51'W., | 20.00 m. to pt. 30; | S. 89 deg. 51'E., | 11.98 m. to pt. 73; |
| S. 53 deg. 14'W., | 19.99 m. to pt. 31; | N. 00 deg. 03'E., | 87.03 m. to pt. 74; |
| S. 57 deg. 33'W., | 19.99 m. to pt. 32; | DUE EAST | 12.50 m. to pt. 75; |
| S. 61 deg. 56'W., | 19.98 m. to pt. 33; | DUE NORTH | 169.97 m. to pt. 76; |
| S. 66 deg. 13'W., | 20.00 m. to pt. 34; | DUE EAST | 15.00 m. to pt. 77; |
| S. 70 deg. 32'W., | 20.00 m. to pt. 35; | DUE NORTH | 104.95 m. to pt. 78; |
| S. 74 deg. 55'W., | 19.99 m. to pt. 36; | DUE NORTH | 8.48 m. to pt. 79; |
| S. 75 deg. 11'W., | 19.99 m. to pt. 37; | N. 01 deg. 03'W., | 17.93 m. to pt. 80; |
| S. 83 deg. 26'W., | 3.58 m. to pt. 38; | N. 02 deg. 12'W., | 17.93 m. to pt. 81; |
| S. 83 deg. 29'W., | 16.41 m. to pt. 39; | N. 03 deg. 28'W., | 17.90 m. to pt. 82; |
| S. 87 deg. 53'W., | 18.35 m. to pt. 40; | N. 04 deg. 50'W., | 13.13 m. to pt. 83; |
| S. 87 deg. 13'W., | 1.65 m. to pt. 41; | N. 21 deg. 17'W., | 60.89 m. to pt. 84; |
| N. 87 deg. 48'W., | 20.00 m. to pt. 42; | N. 21 deg. 17'W., | 172.57 m. to pt. 85; |
| N. 83 deg. 33'W., | 20.01 m. to pt. 43; | N. 74 deg. 20'W., | 171.52 m. to pt. Of |
| N. 79 deg. 07'W., | 19.97 m. to pt. 44; | | |

Beginning, contaiing an area of ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED NINETY FOUR THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY TWO (1,294,462) SQUARE METERS more or less. All points referred to are indicated on plan and marked on the ground by. Old Ps cyl conc. mons. 15 x 60 cm.; bearings, true, date of the original survey, April 1 to June 20, 1923 (Payatas Estate); that of the resurvey, date of survey Jan. 19-21, 24-28, Feb 1-4, 7-11, 14-18, 21-25 & 28, 2005, and approved on June 23, 2005." **(Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029 shall be referred herein as the "Subject Lot" for brevity).**

A copy of the technical description of the Subject Lot under RS-00-001200 is hereto attached as **Annex "G"** while a copy of the resurvey plan RS-00-001200 is hereto attached as **Annex "H"**, both of which are duly verified and found correct, as well as duly approved by the Regional Technical Director for Lands for National Capital Region (NCR), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

7. The entire area of the Subject Lot is presently bounded by the IBP Road and the Commonwealth Avenue, both of which are public roads owned by the State, as shown by a sketch plan, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "I"**.

8. To date, the Subject Lot is being occupied by various government institutions such as the Sandiganbayan, Commission on Audit and House of Representatives, among others, while the other portions thereof are being occupied by the beneficiaries of NGC-East Side project, whose names appear in the Master List, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "J"**, and made as an integral part hereof. The said beneficiaries erected residential houses inside the Subject Lot and other than that, petitioner herein has no knowledge sufficient to form a belief if there are other persons or entities that erected improvements inside the Subject Lot or are occupying portions thereof or having any interest on the same.

9. The Subject Lot used to form part of Lot 41-C-3, Psd-5383 registered in the name of Roy C. Tuggle ("Tuggle") under Transfer Certificate (TCT) No. 5247, a certified true copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "K"**, and made as an integral part hereof.

10. On 19 August 1948, Tuggle sold Lot 41-C-3, Psd-5383 to Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc. and as a consequence thereof, TCT No. 10245 was issued in favor of Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc. as evidenced by Entry No. 9003 which was annotated at the back of TCT No. 5247, herein marked as **Annex "K-1"** of Annex "K" of this Petition.

11. Thereafter, Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc. caused the subdivision of Lot 41-C-3, psd-5383 into several lots, and including the Subject Lot herein (Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029).

12. Lot 41-C-3, Psd-5383 was subdivided and the Subject Lot came into being by virtue of the expropriation case filed by the Republic of the Philippines, through the Capital City Planning Commission against Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc., before the Court of First Instance of Rizal, Branch III (Quezon City) docketed as Civil Case No. Q-54, entitled ***"Republic of the Philippines vs. Eulogio Rodriguez, Sr., et al"***. The Trial Court rendered a Judgment dated February 21, 1950 declaring, among others, that the State is entitled to retain and appropriate, among others, the Subject Lot subject to the payment of just compensation. However, despite diligent efforts, petitioner failed to secure a copy of the aforesaid judgment since the records of the said expropriation case can no longer be found in the files of the Office of the Clerk of Court, Regional Trial Court of Quezon City (formerly CFI of Rizal [Quezon City]), as evidenced by a Certification dated 20 July 2005 of the said office, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "L"** and made as an integral part hereof. Likewise, plaintiff was not able to secure a copy of subdivision plan of the Subject Lot since neither the Land Registration Authority (LRA) nor the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-NCR, has a copy thereof, as shown by their respective Certifications, copies of which are hereto attached as **Annexes "M" and "N"**, respectively, and made as integral parts hereof.

13. Another expropriation case was filed by the Republic of the Philippines, through the Capital City Planning Commission, against Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc. and several persons, for the acquisition of the 15,000-square meter property described in TCT No. 10245, before the Court of First Instance of Rizal, docketed as Civil Case No. WQ-90, entitled ***"Republic of the Philippines vs. Antonio Zuzuarregue, et al."***. As a result of the filing of this case, the Republic of the Philippines, Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc. and its codefendants entered into an Agreement of Compromise dated 11 May 1950, the pertinent provisions thereof provides:

"1. **That the parties will accept the decision laid down in said case by the Court of First Instance of Rizal (Quezon City Branch), with the following stipulations:**

a) *That the defendants mentioned above hereby waive all interest due on the adjudged value of the expropriated properties;*

b) *That the defendants above named hereby donate 207,006 square meters out of Lots Nos. 410-3 and 39, subject of expropriation in Civil Case No. 0-54;*

c) *That defendant Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc., obligates itself to donate as it hereby donates the land object of expropriation in Civil Case No. Q-90, in favor of the Republic of the Philippines, containing an area of 15,200 square meters, which is a portion of Lot No. 41-C-3 as indicated in the plan attached to the complaint therein; said defendant, Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc., binding itself to execute the necessary deed of donation therefore;*

d) *That defendants named above agree to the payment of the price awarded by the Court subject to the foregoing stipulations in the total sum of ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED THIRTY-ONE PESOS AND EIGHTY CENTAVOS (P1,250,631.80) payable in the following manner.*

1) *SIX HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND PESOS AND NINETY CENTAVOS (P625,315.90) in government bonds in favor of Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc., payable within five (5) years at not less than three percent (3%) per annum;*

2) *THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P300,000.00), to be given to the Philippine National Bank in payment of the mortgage indebtness of defendants Eulogio Rodriguez, Sr., and E. Rodriguez, Inc., and*

3) *The balance of THREE HUNDRED TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN PESOS AND NINETY CENTAVOS (P325,215.90) in each to be paid to all defendants above names, through Eulogio Rodriguez, Sr., within a reasonable time."*

14. However, despite diligent efforts, the Republic of the Philippines was not able to secure certified true copy of the Agreement of Compromise dated 11 May 1950, as well as the favorable Judgment thereon, since the records of Civil Case No. Q-90 can no longer be found in the records of the Office of the Clerk of Court of the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City (formerly CFI of Rizal [Quezon City]), as shown by a Certification dated 20 July 2005 of the said office, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "O"** an made as an integral part hereof. Further, the Archives Division, Records Management and Archives Office of the Pambansang Sinupan likewise issued a Certification dated 16 September 2003, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "P"**, stating that it has no record on file of the Agreement of Compromise 11 dated May 1950 that was notarized by Antonio H. Noblejas. However, the NGC Housing Project has in its files a copy of the Agreement of Compromise dated 11 May 1950, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "Q"** and made as an integral part hereof.

15. The aforesaid Agreement of Compromise was implemented by the parties thereto as evidenced by the partial cancellation of TCT No. 10245, and by the fact that the said title was forwarded to the Registry of Deeds of Quezon City on 10 August 1951, as evidenced by the Certification of even date by the Register of Deeds of Rizal in Pasig, a certified true copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "R"** and made as an integral part hereof.

16. As a result of the partial cancellation of TCT No. 10245, another TCT was issued in favor of the Republic of the Philippines over the Subject Lot, but the same cannot be ascertained and located, despite exertion of utmost effort, as evidenced by a Certification dated 06 October 2003 by the Register of Deeds of Quezon City, a copy of which is hereto attached as **Annex "S"** and made as an integral part hereof. It may be safely presumed that copies of TCT No. 10245 and the TCT over the Subject Lot were among the documents gutted and consumed by fire when the Registry of Deeds of Quezon City was blazed sometime in 1988.

17. Furthermore, the owner's duplicate copy of the TCT of the Subject Lot issued in favor of the Republic of the Philippines was also lost, and cannot be located. Likewise, there are no records or copy thereof that was found despite diligent efforts exerted. Worse, the Capital City Planning Commission, which filed the expropriation proceeding against Eulogio Rodriguez, Inc., had already ceased to function and all of its records cannot be located.

18. In view thereof, there exist a necessity to file the instant petition for the reconstruction of the TCT of the Subject Lot issued in favor and in the name of the Republic of the Philippines considering that the latter is the absolute owner of the same.

19. Petitioner knows in good faith that there are no existing deeds or other instruments affecting the Subject Lot that were presented for registration, and that there are no existing liens and/or encumbrances over the same.

20. The Republic of the Philippines is the absolute and lawful owner of Subject Lot (Lot 41-C-3-A, Psd-30029), and has in fact continuously and uninterruptedly used and possessed the same for public and quasi-public purposes for a long period of time. The number of Government Buildings and/or Institutions that were constructed in the Subject Lot can prove this fact. A copy of the list of Government Buildings and/or Institutions occupying the Subject Lot is hereto attached as **Annex "T"** and made as an integral part hereof.

21. Moreover, government buildings were already erected over the Subject Property even during the lifetime of the distinguished and eminent Senator Eulogio Rodriguez, Sr., and during the time when his son Isidro S. Rodriguez was Governor of Rizal and whose spouse Adelina S. Rodriguez was also the Mayor of Quezon City.

22. The avowed purpose of the present petition, after the same shall have been granted, is for the Republic of the Philippines to dispose the Subject Lot pursuant to Republic Act No. 9207."

Being sufficient in form and substance, NOTICE is hereby GIVEN that the petition will be heard on July 13, 2006 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning, at which date and time all INTERESTED PARTIES are required to APPEAR and SHOW CAUSE, if any there be, why the petition should not be granted, and for said petitioner to substantiate his allegations.

Publication of this order in the Official Gazette, twice, in two successive issues, at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of hearing is required, at petitioner's expense.

Petitioner is likewise required (1) to furnish the following with copies of this Order and submit proof of service thereof to this Court;

1) Office of the Solicitor General (OSG).
2) The Office of the Registered of Deeds of Quezon City.
3) The Office of the Land Registration Authority (LRA).
4) The Director of the Land Management Bureau, the Chief Public Prosecutor of Quezon City.
5) The City Legal Department of Quezon City.
6) The adjacent owners and the actual occupants of the property in question, if other than the owners;

(2) to post copy of this Order at the Lobby of the Quezon City Hall of Justice, the Main Lobby of the City Hall of Quezon City, and in a conspicuous place of the Barangay Hall where the property is located, for a period of thirty (30) days, a certification to that effect to be submitted to this Court, and; (3) to furnish the owners of adjoining parties with copy of the Order and submit proof of compliance therewith to this Court.

SO ORDERED

Quezon City, Philippines, February 1, 2006.

FATIMA GONZALES-ASDALA
Judge

Copy furnished:

USEC. LUCILLE P. ORTILE 0-159
Housing & Urban Devt. Coordinating Council
6/F Atrium Bldg., Makati Ave., Makati City

THE LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY
Quezon City 0-160

THE REGISTER OF DEEDS 0-161
Quezon City

THE CITY PROSECUTOR
Quezon City 2-6-06

THE OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR GENERAL
134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village 0-162
Makati City

THE LAND MANAGEMENT BUREAU 0-163
Quezon City

THE CITY LEGAL DEPARTMENT 0-164
Quezon City

JFGA/mhay
Mailed: 2/6/06

(PDI - April 24, 2006)

PHILRACOM H-RACING

# Real Spicy rips rivals

By Musong R. Castillo

REAL SPICY PREVAILED OVER Speed Advantage in a race decided in the final strides yesterday to pocket the first Philracom Pinoy H-Racing Cup at the Santa Ana Park and stamp his claim as the best local in the land.

The handsome chestnut horse came up with a final burst of speed under heavy punishment from first-time partner Louie Balboa to win by three-quarters of a length over the Fernando Raquel-steered Speed Advantage.

The winning time was one minute and 30 seconds for the 1,450-meter race.

Australian-born import Golden Link fared badly in her first true test against the best, failing to sustain a breakneck pace under Jessie B. Hernandez to finish third some two lengths behind.

It was the fifth straight win for the Hermie Esguerra-owned Real Spicy, and the blistering time was just a full second shy of the new track record he set a couple of months back in a regular race.

"He is just in great shape," said Balboa, who piloted the progeny of Real Quiet out of Spicy Tale in place of Jesse B. Guce, in Filipino. "It's as if he ran a race that he did not want to lose."

Real Spicy was sent off as the slight pick after cornering P410,025 out of the total pool of P1,010,414, and the 4-year-old, who won the Triple Crown's third leg last year, looked like he's done when the field rounded for home after Golden Link threw him wide and opened the door for Speed Advantage inside.

But Balboa persevered, applying the whip rapidly on Real Spicy, who responded with his second wind to win P210,000 for Esguerra and add another handsome trophy to his growing collection of major stakes victories.

More importantly, the victory proved how well Esguerra's team is preparing Real Spicy for the bigger races ahead, particularly the PCSO First Gentleman Silver Cup, the unofficial championship for all local horses.

Real Spicy, who turned in quarter clockings of 13-23-24'-27', started fourth behind the speedball Golden Link, longshot Slatkis and Speed Advantage.

Speed Advantage, who won the Presidential Gold Cup last year, actually ran a smart race with Raquel keeping him from wresting the lead early and getting him to rally by the rail.

Real Spicy and Speed Advantage could meet again in a major race at the San Lazaro Leisure Park on Sunday in the Marho Founders' Cup before their much-awaited showdown in the Silver Cup on May 14.

# Siblings of top Aussie colt now in the country

THE AUCTION OF YEARLINGS IN Australia last Easter Sunday produced all-time high marks with a colt by Redoute's Choice out of Deja Slew fetching a princely A$3 million ($2.4 million or P132 million)—a single sale record Down Under.

The Australian bloodline is very much present in local horseracing, with Deja Slew progenies numbering highly in the Philippines, some of them in stud and the others still active in both race tracks.

Sire sensation Redoute's Choice was the star of the William Inglis auction and the sale of that colt capped a total of 14 yearlings sold for more than A$1million ($745,000) each and a total of 35 youngsters going for an average of A$710,000 ($528,130).

South African trainer Charles Laird made the historic purchase representing multi-billionaire Marcus Jooste, and the sale will undoubtedly change the landscape of stud and horseracing in the world.

Redoute's Choice old stud fee was around A$44,000. After that ground-breaking purchase of Laird, the services of the stallion, owned by Arrowfield Farm, has been jacked up to A$330,000.

Former Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office chairman Dr. Fernando Carrascoso, who breeds horses in Australia, is the first owner of Deja Slew.

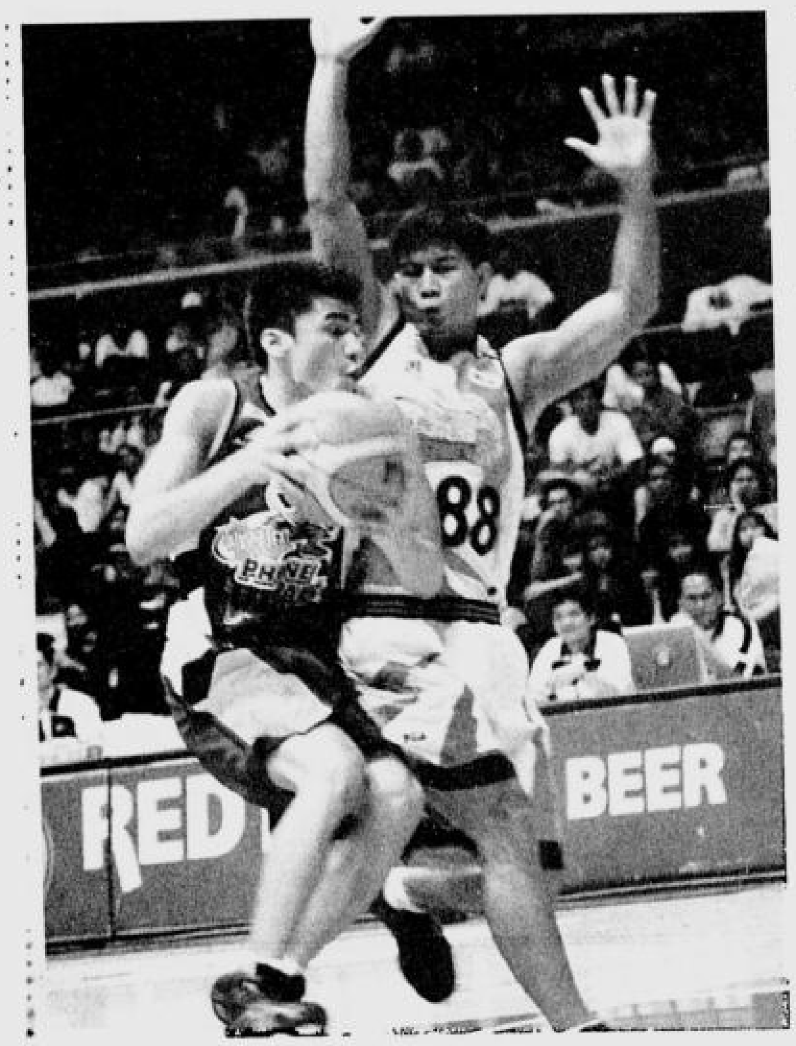
Two of Deja Slew's famous offspring in the country, who are half-siblings of the record-setting colt, are Bull Market and Real Slew, both retired to stud and standing in two of the most modern stud farms in the Philippines.

Billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat owns the stallion Bull Market, while sportsman Hermie Esguerra's Herma Farms in Lipa City has Real Slew.

Real Slew was retired to stud by Esguerra last year and is a maiden broodmare.

Bull Market is the sire of two of the more promising chargers today—Triple Crown hope King's Dominion (out of Reasonable Share) and Hillary (out of Reine Margaux) which is owned and bred by Esguerra.

"This only goes to show that the owners are treading the right path towards upgrading the pedigree of racehorses in the Philippines," Esguerra, also the owner of former super horse Wind Blown, told the INQUIRER. *Musong R. Castillo*


MAC CARDONA (left) drives against Chris Calaguio. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

# Beermen notch 7th straight win

From page A33

with 22 points and 14 rebounds, Dondon Hontiveros scattered 19 points while Danny Ildefonso, who had a pair of telling put-backs, finished with 11 points and 11 rebounds as the Beermen improved to 9-2 overall.

"It was Danny's day, but we always have a different hero every game," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico. "The key, I guess, was the way the players did their job defensively."

The Beermen forced Talk 'N Text to miss seven straight shots from the field at one stretch while Seigle, Peña and Ildefonso did damage on the other end and eventually dealt the Phone Pals their first loss in four games.

Talk 'N Text dropped back to 5-5 despite getting 29 points from Vic Pablo.

"We just ran our streak at the right time," said Uichico. "They have good first and second units so we have to adjust to their rotation."

Asi Taulava scored 17 points and grabbed 11 rebounds and Harvey Carey had 12 points and 12 rebounds for the Phone Pals.

In the second game, Air21 snapped a three-game slide with a 107-88 victory over Coca Cola.

The Express upped their record to 4-7 while the Tigers, who have lost back-to-back games, dropped to 6-4.

**The scores**

**SAN MIGUEL 105**—Seigle 27, Peña 22, Hontiveros 19, Ildefonso 11, Racela 8, Calagulo 8, Cablay 6, Adriano 2, Noble 2

**TALK 'N TEXT 99**—Pablo 29, Taulava 17, Carey 12, Alapag 10, Ferriols 8, Belano 8, Miller 7, Cardona 6, Avenido 2, Juinio 0

**Quarters:** 32-26, 51-52, 78-80, 105-99

**Second game**

**AIR21 107**—Ritualo 19, Cañaleta 18, Arboleda 18, Y. de Ocampo 16, R. de Ocampo 13, Telan 12, Tubid 6, Fran 3, Se 2, Dacia 0, Bernardo 0.

**COCA-COLA 88**—Arigo 18, Peek 16, Reavis 13, Singson 11, Abarrientos 8, Mamaril 7, Antonio 7, Wainwright 6, Miranda 2, Francisco 0.

**Quarters:** 20-22, 50-39, 84-64, 107-88

## SPORTSWATCH

### Espiritu rules Hiso-Token bikefest

FORMER MARLBORO TOUR '96 TITLIST VICTOR ESPIRITU PROVED THAT he is still a force to reckon among the country's best riders after dominating the first edition of the Hiso-Token Cycling Cup held at the Golden Valley Commercial Center, Malanday in Marikina City over the weekend. The 30-year-old pride of Malabon, the 1996 Tour champion, made his move in the last 25 of the 50-lap criterium race as he joined a four-man breakaway group made up of his former Pagcor Trade teammate Lloyd Reynante and national team riders Alvin Binosa and Alfie Catalan. Now an armyman, Espiritu pulled away from his elite rivals but Catalan, the 23rd SEA Games gold medalist, managed to keep him company in the final stretch.

### Outdoor sports up in PSA Forum

SUMMER OUTDOOR SPORTS TAKE CENTERSTAGE IN THIS WEEK'S EDItion of the PSA Forum at the main function room of the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila. Returning to the public sports program aired over Sports Radio 918 and sponsored by Pagcor and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza are the officials and participants of the second leg of the Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball tournament led by Tisha Abundo. Joining them in the 10:30 a.m. session are Francis Rivera, Nonoy Cabrera and Julian Goitia who are going to promote the 12th annual convention of the National Federation of Motorcycle Clubs Philippines set April 28-30 in Vigan and Laoag.

### Roligon hosts 50 NCA fights

MORE THAN 50 THRILLING FIGHTS AWAIT AFICIONADOS DURING THE National Cockers Association's 5-cock derby tomorrow at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City. Hosts Ito Ynares, Butch Pichay and Edu Manzano assured participants of the NCA's last event for the month of an even more exciting program than last week's well-attended NCA 5-cocker. The entries will include Binangonan Balbina, Binangonan Balbina I of Ynares and Lucky Rin Firefly Binangonan of Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman, Pichay Spartans of Pichay and Rey Briones, Firefly 100 RM and Firefly RM 13 of the Firefly Group, JMS Farms of Joey Sarasola and Manzano, Mulawin AA of Rudy Albano, Magic Wing Sundance and Wild Wing Sundance of Ronnie Puno, Red Creek I and Red Creek II of Iggy Arroyo, BR Fatman S Bacolor of Tony Tan and Pepito Ngo, Jaen VGB Firefly of Ellan Nagano and Jade Resort Julianne of Manny and Arman Santos, among many others.

### PCAP derby set today at Makati

FIRST CLASS COCKFIGHTING RESUMES AT THE AIR-CONDITIONED Makati Coliseum today when the seventh leg of the Pinoy Cockers Asssociation of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-cock derby series unfolds at 5 p.m. The 70-fight program is sponsored by B-Meg Derby Ace. Three participants are currently tied for first in the exciting PCAP Cocker of the Year race—Jake Macasaet (San Vicente Ferrer), Butchoy Olano (Ika Mae) and Richard Bates and Col. Katigbak (Victoria Peak) with 22 points each. Trailing them are Lito Orillaza (Golden Syca, 21); Manny Pacquiao and Amor Salvanera (Super Pacman, 20.5); Edmund Yasay (Rooster Wild, 19.5); Tony Tan and Pepito Ngo (Swing Fatman, 18.5); and the entries of William Co, Matt Bitanga and Rainier Kau with 18 points each. Meanwhile, the Summer Salpukan 6-cock derby finally starts on Wednesday, April 26. The seven-day super cockfest dangles a guaranteed prize of P4.4 million. Interested parties may contact 896-3545 or 895-6475 for inquiries (look for Joan or Stephanie).

# Imports tell NY Times PBA far too tough

By Francis Ochoa

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION is no longer getting the type of imports it used to. And those who manage to get here are finding the situation far too tough.

"You might get off the plane on Friday, and if you don't play good you could be gone next week," said James Hodges III, an agent based in Atlanta, in an interview with the New York Times. Hodges also played as an import in the PBA in 1996.

The article in the Times revealed the pressure US players feel in the PBA, citing as an example ex-DePaul University standout Quemont Greer and NBA veteran Darvin Ham.

Greer played for Red Bull in the last Fiesta Conference. With Greer at the forefront averaging over 27 points a game, the Barako made it past the elimination phase and survived the knockout rounds.

Red Bull, though, won the title with James Penny, who replaced Greer in a decision by coach Yeng Guiao that turned out to be a stroke of genius.

But even then, Penny, 29, found the situation a bit awkward.

"Usually, when something like this happens the team is struggling," Penny told the Times. "You don't come in and try to replace somebody who's the leading scorer in the league with his team being in second or third place. It's kind of iffy to me."

Ham, highly touted before actually slipping into a uniform and playing here for the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, had it worse. He played three games, the Phone Pals were eliminated and he felt that he became a target in the league.

He said in the Times article that playing in the PBA was like "'hooping in handcuffs' because he had jet lag and he was unfamiliar with his teammates and persecuted by referees."

"They try to put the pressure on the import," Ham said. "It's a team sport. Everyone should be held accountable. I think the imports suffer for the lack of performance the [locals] might put out."

Worse, Ham felt slighted at being described as a "no extraordinary player" in the PBA website.

"I averaged a double-double over here with like 16 and 12," he said, referring to points and rebounds. "These articles the PBA is putting online are like propaganda."

The Times talked to a handful of PBA coaches, including Purefoods assistant mentor Ronnie Magsanoc, grand slam coach and current TV analyst Norman Black and PBA head coach Joel Banal.

Magsanoc told the Times that imports are expected to do "pretty much everything," including scoring, rebounding, defending and being the team leader on the court.

"You're almost like a hired gun," Black said. "You better get the win, and if you don't win, you better get your numbers."

If you don't you're shipped out.

The Times also noted that imports can be replaced at any point in the tournament, meaning, "it would be possible, for example, to hire Latrell Sprewell for Game 7 of the association's finals."

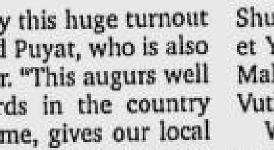
Banal told the Times that such a move isn't unfair, but a wise management decision.

"They deserve to win if they can convince him to come," he told NYT.

Despite the fickle-mindedness of team owners and coaches here, imports would rather try their luck in the PBA than, say, in the NBA's developmental league and the CBA.

# GTK, Graham Lim meet one-on-one

CLEAN LIVING



*Manolo R. Iñigo*

I WAS FILLED WITH PLEASURABLE expectation when I witnessed a rare one-on-one meeting between one-time allies and now bitter foes Graham Lim and Go Teng Kok at the Century Park Hotel recently.

It was a hush-hush affair (off the record, both had requested) so I won't mention the details of the meeting. But I still felt glad that-finally-the lines of communications have been opened between the two warring camps. As we all very well know, the embattled Lim, who is facing deportation charges, is the secretary general of the Basketball Association of the Philippines headed by former Sen. Joey Lina while the controversial Go Teng Kok or GTK for short, is a special assistant to former Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee which expelled the BAP last June. The POC decision led the international basketball federation (Fiba) to suspend the country from all events under its aegis. Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann recommended the suspension of the Philippines.

Although the recent GTK-Graham Lim one-on-one meeting did not gain much headway, still the prospects for a solution is not totally out if only both camps, including their advisers and respective lawyers, would not be too technical about the whole thing when they sit down to thresh out the 10-month-old problem. They should apply common sense and not rely on legal gobbledygook.

***

WOMEN'S BILLIARDS COMES OF AGE. The mere fact that reigning world champion Kim Ga-young of South Korea is coming over to compete in the first ever Enerva Ladies 9-Ball Championship on April 25-28 at the Robinson's Galleria is a good sign that women's billiards in the Philippines is finally coming of age.

The winner of the 2006 World 9-Ball Ladies Tournament and last year's US Ladies Open and American Ladies Invitational Open, Kim, 20, is the prohibitive choice to win the tourney and the first prize of $10,000.

A huge field of 46 players from nine Asian countries are taking part in the pioneering project supported by Enerva Energy Drink and organized by Puyat Sports headed by billiards "godfather" Aristeo "Putch" Puyat. The event will be telecast from April 26 over IBC-13 starting at 7 p.m. It is sanctioned by the Asian Confederation of Billiards Sports and the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines headed by Ernie Fajardo.

"I am surprised by this huge turnout of participants," said Puyat, who is also a noted horse owner. "This augurs well for women's billiards in the country and, at the same time, gives our local players the opportunity to improve their lives."

A qualifying series will be held tomorrow to select the 16 other players who will advance to the main round of 32 on April 26-28. Aside from Kim, the other player to watch is our very own Rubilen Amit, the 24-year-old champion from Cebu who won two gold medals in last year's SEA Games. She will lead the Philippine delegation also composed of Mary Ann Basas, Iris Ranola and Johanna Dee.

"They're ready to do battle against the region's best and brightest," said their coach, Boyet Asonto.

Other players to reckon with are Taiwan's top players Jennifer Chen and Shin Mei-liu, Akimi Kajitani of Japan, Indonesia's Desak Kasih Aryati and Nova Floura Rachmawati, Hyun Ji-won, also of Korea; China's Jia Li and Zhou Meng-meng, Chai Zeet Huey and Hoe Shu Wah of Singapore, Esther Kwan Siet Yee and Suhana Dwi Binti Sabtu of Malaysia and Santhinee Jaisuekul and Vuthidhan Kongkaket of Thailand.

While women's billiards is not yet in vogue in the Philippines compared to the mass popularity of its male counterpart, the Ladies 9-Ball Championship could serve as a breakthrough for the sport. Aimed at promoting billiards among women and preparing them for this year's Doha Asian Games, it also provides a golden chance for the Philippines to showcase its world-renowned hospitality and show to the world that the country is a safe and peaceful place to go.

Billiards is enjoying tremendous popularity in the Philippines today mainly because of Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Alex Pagulayan and Marlon Manalo. The record will show that millions of Filipinos are incurable billiards fans. Every tournament held here is always well-attended even though the protagonists are not Filipinos. It is also on record that the country's leading television networks are among its strongest supporters, covering live or on a delayed basis several local and international tournaments. Billiards is now big-league stuff and no longer associated with gambler, hustlers and truants.

# Cudia, Macaspac rule JVC reg'l tilt

JACKILYN CUDIA OF TEAM LASIK overwhelmed teammate Kathleen Balatbat, 21-9, 21-13, while Stanley Macaspac survived Rafael Sanchez, 21-19, 21-14, to top their respective divisions in the elite event of the JVC Regional Badminton Championships at the Excel Badminton Center in San Fernando, Pampanga over the weekend.

The victories netted Cudia and Macaspac P5,000, gold medal plus gift items each with the duo also gaining berths in the upcoming JVC Open Badminton Championships slated in July at the Glorietta.

Liza Encarnacion, meanwhile, outlasted Golden Shuttle Foundation teammate Monica Yupangco, 21-16, 21-10, to bag the girls' crown in the junior division sponsored by JVC (PHILS.) Inc. Paul Vivás of Mighty Bulilit took the boys' plum with a 21-6, 21-11 rout of J. Hendrix Pajarillo of UC Pozorrubio.

Meanwhile, Davao will host the third regional leg on May 1-5 at the Wheels 'N More Badminton Club with Bacolod staging the final leg on May 15-19 at the Pohang Badminton Center. Deadline for submission of entries is on April 26 (Davao) and May 11 (Bacolod).

Over at SM Pampanga, Gerald Sibayan disposed of last year's 10-under champion Jan Banquiles in a thrilling three-setter to gain a quarterfinal berth in the boys' 12-under division.

Sibayan, playing out of Fort Bonifacio Elem. School, bucked a first set setback to complete a rousing 21-23, 21-14, 21-14 victory.

Others who advanced in the event backed by Victor rackets, Bingo Bonanza, Snickers Chocolate, Hanford, L-Time Studio, Lactacyd, Alaska , Pinoy Exchange, Pioneer Life, Accel, PowerSmash, The STAR, Sunbolt and Rudy Project, were Michael Bote, Tomas Sayco, Bernardito Ablang and Lance Bautista.

**OPENING SERVE: Guests and officials of the V-League presented by Shakey's do the ceremonial serves officially opening the second conference at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym on Saturday. They are (from left) league commissioner Tony Boy Liao, marketing director Anil Buxani of Sonak Trading (Mikasa distributor in the Philippines), IFFSI-Shakey's consultant Leopoldo "Chukri" Prieto III, IFFSI-general manager Vicente Gregorio, Sports Vision director, Philippine Volleyball Federation finance officer Ricky Palou and ABC-5 sports programming manager Winston de la Cruz.**

# World Cup national elims under way today

**A TRIP TO CARACAS, VENEZUELA AND A chance to compete in the world's most prestigious individual bowling tournament will be up for grabs as the 2006 Bowling World Cup eliminations unfold in 23 centers today.**

Open to male and female Filipino bowlers 16 years old and above, the tournament will kick off simultaneously at the following centers:

Paeng's Eastwood Bowl, Puyat Sports Farmers, Paeng's Superbowl Bacolod, Q Plaza, Xyber Bowl, Superbowl, Bowling Inn, Pearl Plaza, Paeng's Towncenter Bowl, Paeng's Midtown Bowl, SM West, SM Megamall, SM Fairview, Coronado Lanes (formerly Starlanes), Astrobowl (formerly Metropolis Alabang), Commonwealth, Grand Central, Paeng's Freedom Bowl Imus, Power Bowl, Coastal Lanes, Puyat Sports Baguio, Metromall Lanes and Paeng's Skybowl.

The first qualifying period in these centers will be held until April 24, while the second qualifying stage will start on June 23. The first center finals will be conducted on June 15-23, while the second center finals will be held Sept. 10-14.

The center finals will determine the 84 participants—42 men and 42 women—in the national finals starting on Sept. 22.

The format will be the same as last year's national competition. The finalists will be trimmed to 34 men and women after the first round at Coronado Lanes on Sept. 22 and 24, and further cut to eight men and eight women after the second day on Sept. 26.

The remaining contenders will then figure in head-to-head matches in the best-of-three quarterfinals, semifinals and finals on Sept. 28.

The last day of the national finals will be held at SM Megamall.

The national men's and women's champions will earn the right to play in the 2006 Quibica-AMF Bowling World Cup international finals slated on Nov. 4-10 in Caracas, Venezuela.

# Centennial tops President's Cup Regatta

**By Jasmine W. Payo**

SUBIC—BOLSTERED BY A WELL-TRAINED national sailing team, the Centennial of the Philippines captured the overall championship in the 14th President's Cup Regatta on Saturday at the Subic Bay here.

Judes Echauz's Sydney 46 Centennial, skippered by Jamie Wilmot, topped three of the six inshore races to finish with seven points in the nine-day international tournament.

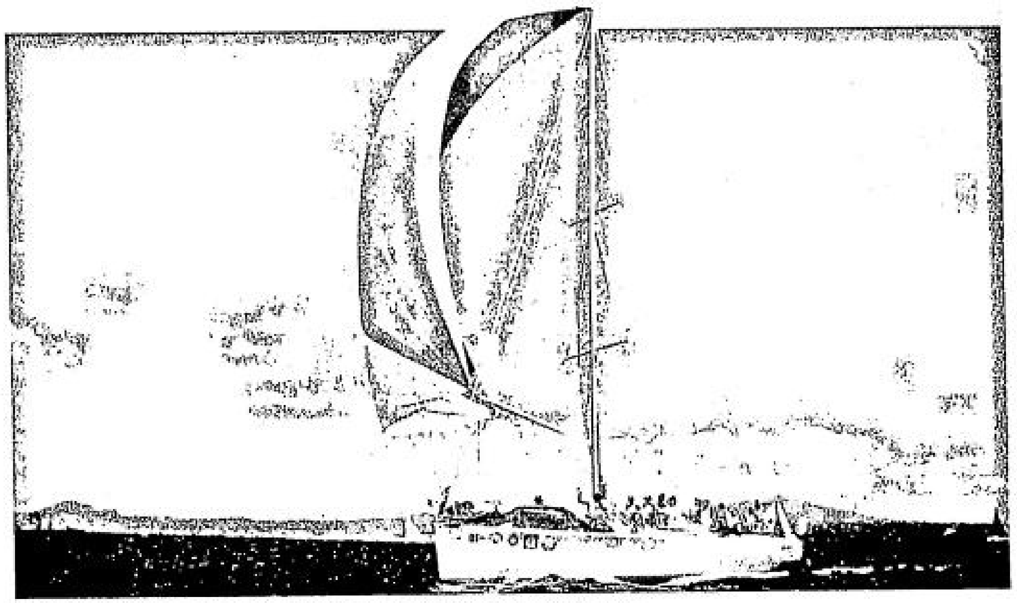
"I have 14 members in my crew, 10 are from the Philippine sailing team," said Echauz after his nine-year-old boat clinched its fifth tournament title in the IRC racing class. "We're quite happy because we haven't been competing, we've been absent in the past two years."

Jo de Ros, owned by George Hackett of the United States, dominated the IRC Cruiser Racer class, while Carrera, owned by Mikhailov Ahexey of Russia, ruled the PY Cruising class.

Ray Ordoveza's Karakoa made it a 1-2 finish for the Philippines in the IRC Racing class. Narrowly trailing Centennial, the Excel 53 Karakoa garnered two first-place finishes for an eight-point total.

Jelik, owned by Frank Pong of Hong Kong, was a distant third with 16.5 points.

"Most of the race we were competing against a local boat, Karakoa, which won two years ago. Before (the last day of competition), we were tied with Karakoa," said Echauz.



**CENTENNIAL** sets sail toward yet another Regatta victory.

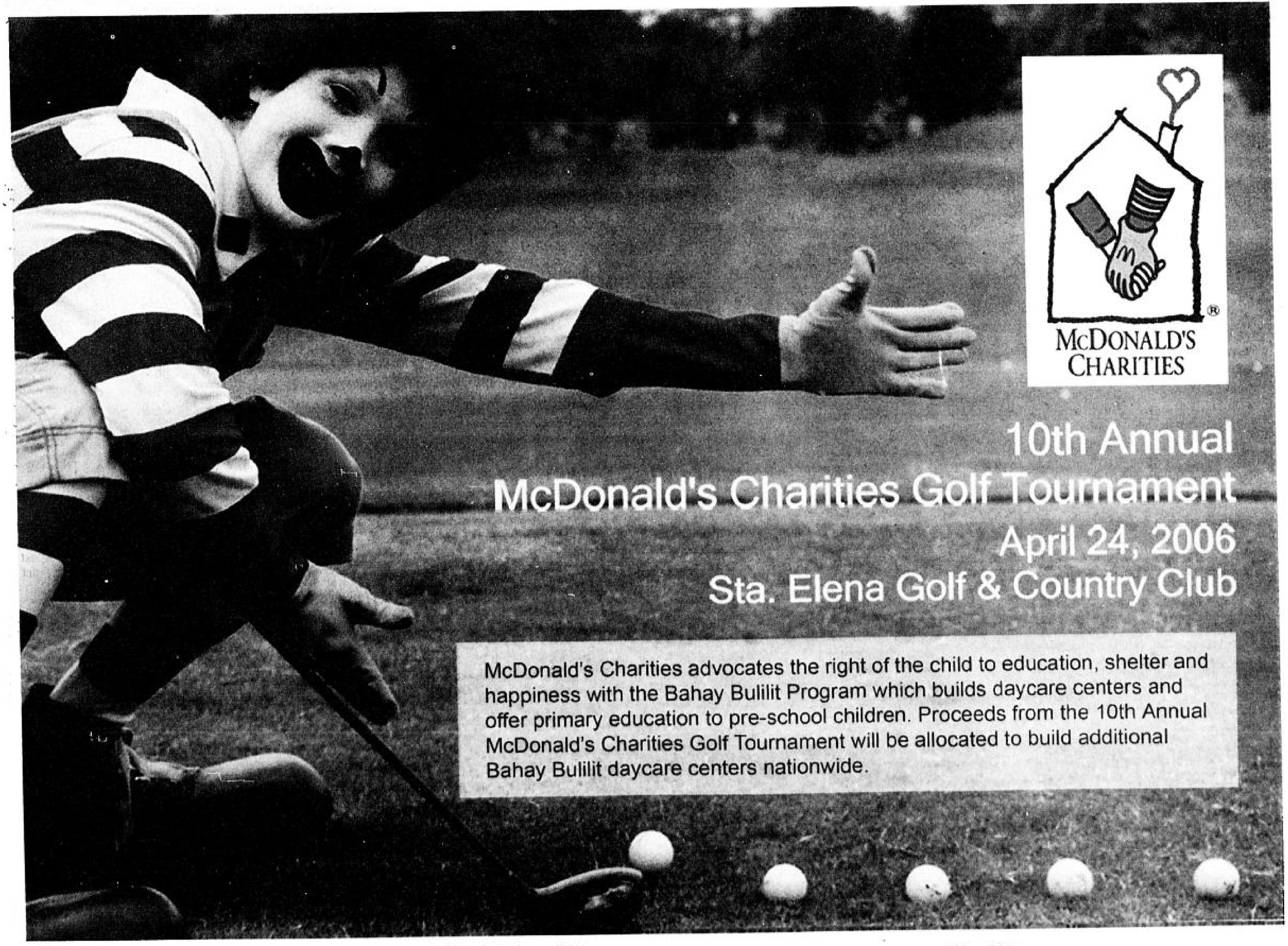
Also the winner in 1997, 2000, 2001 and 2002, Echauz noted that the cooperative weather also boosted his crew's campaign.

"We were not sure if we could win it," he added. "But the race turned out to be very good because the wind was quite consistent."

Also on board Centennial were Capt. Tom Hofvenschiold and co-owner Rep. Ricky Sandoval.

In the IRC Cruiser Race, Vivaldi, owned by Claudio Altura of the Philippines, aggregated 10 points for a second-place finish, just four points behind winner Jo de Ros. Rags of Scotland's Allan Burrell settled for third place with 15 points.

Completing the winners in the PY Cruising class are Manta of the Philippines' Edwin Almeda with eight points and Fast Exit of Japan 's Seiji Kawakami with 14 points.



McDONALD'S CHARITIES

10th Annual
McDonald's Charities Golf Tournament
April 24, 2006
Sta. Elena Golf & Country Club

McDonald's Charities advocates the right of the child to education, shelter and happiness with the Bahay Bulilit Program which builds daycare centers and offer primary education to pre-school children. Proceeds from the 10th Annual McDonald's Charities Golf Tournament will be allocated to build additional Bahay Bulilit daycare centers nationwide.

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# Spurs, Cavs get off to hot starts

## Parker leads San Antonio rout of Sacramento; Clippers pip Nuggets

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—TONY PARKer scored 25 points as San Antonio began defense of their National Basketball Association title with a 122-88 thrashing of Sacramento on Saturday.**

"This is the playoffs and everybody is motivated," France's Parker said.

"In 2004, when we were defending the title, we got experience from that. I think everybody is ready. We're not going to shoot like that every night. It's just one of those things."

The Los Angeles Clippers held off the Denver Nuggets for their first post-season win in nine years in the other West matchup on Saturday.

Seeking their fourth title in eight years, the top-seeded Spurs were unrelenting against the eighth-seeded Kings in the opener of their Western Conference first-round series.

Parker scored 23 of his 25 points in the first half, when the Spurs shot a searing 68 percent (26-of-38) from the field and tallied a season-high 73 points.

Nazr Mohammed added 18 points for the Spurs, who had seven players in double figures, led by as many as 37 points and finished at 57.5 percent (42-of-73).

"We made shots tonight," Mohammed said. "We didn't expect such a large margin against them. We need to come ready for the next game and be ready to grind it out."

Since the acquisition of Ron Artest on Jan. 26, Sacramento had discovered defense, going 26-14 while allowing just 94.3 points per game. Artest went so far as to boldly predict that the Kings would win the championship.

However, that defense disappeared as Parker penetrated at will, scoring and setting up teammates.

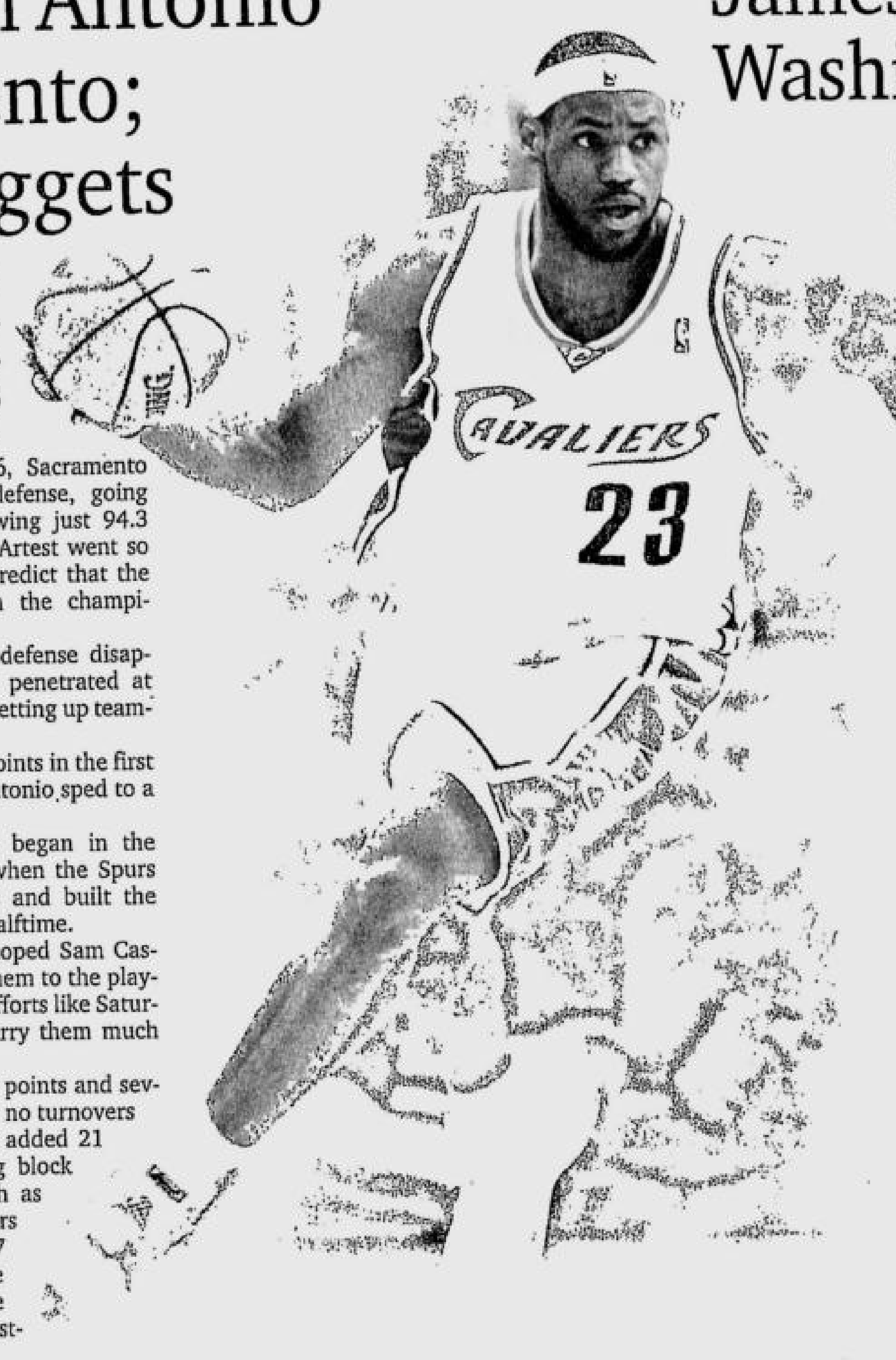
He scored 16 points in the first quarter as San Antonio sped to a 32-24 lead.

The onslaught began in the second quarter, when the Spurs scored 41 points and built the lead to 73-39 at halftime.

The Clippers hoped Sam Cassell would take them to the playoffs. With more efforts like Saturday's, he may carry them much further.

Cassell had 19 points and seven assists against no turnovers and Elton Brand added 21 points and a big block down the stretch as the Clippers recorded a 89-87 victory over the Nuggets in game one of their first-round series.

"This is big. This is not the Clipper teams of the past," Cassell said. *AFP*



**LEBRON James shows everybody how to make a playoff debut. He comes up with a triple double right in Game One and leads the Cavaliers past the Washington Wizards.** AFP

## James lifts Cleveland past Washington; Heat fry Bulls

CLEVELAND—LEBRON JAMES made a spectacular National Basketball Association playoff debut Saturday, becoming just the third player to post a triple-double in his first postseason game.

James's 32 points 11 assists and 11 rebounds powered the Cleveland Cavaliers past the Washington Wizards, 97-86. In the day's second Eastern Conference clash, the Miami Heat beat the Chicago Bulls, 111-106.

But the day belonged to James, as the 21-year-old superstar forward produced his 10th career triple-double and became the second-youngest player in NBA playoff history with double-figure statistics in three categories in a game, outdone only by legend Magic Johnson.

Only James, Johnson in 1980 and Johnny McCarthy in 1960 have achieved the feat in a playoff debut.

"King James" admitted the effort surprised even his wildest expectations as the Cavaliers, who had not reached the playoffs since 1998, took a 1-0 lead in the best-of-seven first-round series. Game Two will be played here on Tuesday.

"I've had a lot of big dreams but this is one of the best to come true," James said. "The way we played today it was magnificent."

James scored 19 points in the first half, lifting Cleveland to a 50-36 half-time lead, and the Cavaliers kept the edge throughout a dominating second half.

"It was everything I expected—high intensity crowd, every possession counted," James said. "I just wanted us to come out and play hard and protect the home court."

Driving to the basket and taking bumps from Wizards defenders time after time, James sent a message that he would not be defeated in his long-awaited playoff debut.

"I had no idea that he had a triple-double," Cleveland coach Mike Brown said. "He never ceases to amaze me. The things that he does offensively just blow you away."

The Cavaliers improved in James' rookie season and last year went 42-40 but lost the final Eastern Conference playoff berth on a tie-breaker.

The Cavaliers have not won a playoff series since 1993, when James was only eight years old. And James realizes that to advance past the Wizards, Cleveland must continue to play as well as they did in the opener.

"We're going to have to play the same way we did tonight," James said. "We just tried to come in and get as many defensive stops as we could."

In Miami, Dwyane Wade scored 14 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter and Shaquille O'Neal had 27 points and 16 rebounds as the Heat held off the tenacious Bulls to take a 1-0 lead in their series.

Jason Williams scored 17 points for the second-seeded Heat, who shot 63 percent from the field in the first half but had to scramble in the fourth quarter to turn back a rally by the seventh-seeded Bulls.

The series opener became a battle of attrition, as the Heat lost Udonis Haslem to an ejection in the second quarter and Wade to cramps in the final minute. *AFP*

**FEDERER: I'm ready for Nadal** REUTERS

# Klitschko stops Byrd in seventh round

BERLIN, GERMANY—THIS TIME, Wladimir Klitschko refused to let the match with Chris Byrd go the distance.

The Ukrainian stopped Byrd in the seventh round of a one-sided fight to gain the IBF heavyweight title on Saturday.

Klitschko's right hook finished off the American 41 seconds into the round, the second time Byrd was floored in the fight.

The rematch was similar to their first encounter in October 2001. Byrd also lost that bout, although he survived two knock downs on his way to losing a decision.

This time around Klitschko—executing American trainer Emanuel Steward's strategy flawlessly—finished off Byrd early. It began in the third round when Byrd, dropping his hands for a second, took a pair of hard left-right combinations from the 2-meter (6-foot-6) Klitschko.

"It was like a musician playing notes," Klitschko said.

After the fight, Klitschko first went to speak to his beaten rival, then to Byrd's trainer and father, Joe.

"He should be proud—I have never seen anybody take that much punishment and come back," Klitschko said.

In the fifth round, Byrd climbed to his feet after being knocked down then withstood a barrage of shots. He took a beating for more than a minute as 14,500 spectators roared until Klitschko backed off. Byrd waved his gloves at Klitschko, telling his opponent to come at him.

"He's a fighter with a big, big heart," Klitschko said. "But he provoked me."

Klitschko became the third fighter from the former Soviet Union to win a heavyweight title in four months. Russian Nikolai Valuev took John Ruiz's WBA belt and Sergei Liakhovich of Belarus won Brewster's WBO crown. That leaves Hasim Rahman as the only American champion. *AP*

**WLADIMIR Klitschko (right) delivers a right hand to Chris Byrd.** AP

# Roger gains finals ticket

MONTE CARLO, MONACO—ROGER FEDERER thinks the key to beating Rafael Nadal is to be ready for a fight.

"Just stay with him, for the entire time," Federer said. "I have the feeling that other guys tend not to take the physical challenge with him. That's what I won't do."

Top-ranked Federer and second-ranked Nadal meet in Sunday's final at the Monte Carlo Masters, after contrasting semifinal wins.

It will be Federer's 12th consecutive final appearance and sixth this year, while Nadal hopes to extend his unbeaten streak on clay to 42 matches and beat Federer for the fourth time in five meetings.

Federer lost to Nadal at Dubai, United Arab Emirates—his only defeat in 34 matches this year—and feels he gained valuable lessons then.

"He's quite one-dimensional with his game," said Federer after Saturday's 6-2, 6-4 semifinal win over Fernando Gonzalez of Chile. Nadal needed more than 2 1/2 hours to beat semifinal foe Gaston Gaudio, 5-7, 6-1, 6-1, to reach the championship stage. *AP*

# *'Knight in shining armor' suits up for London marathon*

LONDON—HE'S RUNNING THE London marathon for a good cause, and on Sunday, Lloyd Scott will be—quite literally—a knight in shining armor.

Instead of shorts and a T-shirt, the 44-year-old leukemia survivor intends to run the course in a 100-pound (45-kilogram) suit of armor. He anticipates it will take him seven days to complete, with rests at night.

On top of it all, he will be lugging a 200-pound (90-kilogram) dragon behind him during the 26.2-mile (42-kilometer) trek.

Scott already holds the record for the slowest marathon, which he set in 2002. That year, dressed as a deep-sea diver, it took him five days to finish. He believes his knight costume, donned in honor of St. George's Day, will make the run even more lengthy.

"It's far more difficult than when I did it in a diving suit, because it's about three times heavier," Scott said. "Crossing roads, getting up sidewalks, curves, pavements, I've got all that to contend with."

Nearly 35,000 people from some 50 nations will be competing at the marathon Sunday, organizers said. With 78 percent of runners receiving a spot through a charity, the London Marathon is also celebrated as an enormous fundraiser for various organizations.

Some intend to run barefoot. A squadron of 20 runners are to run dressed as a giant millipede. There is even a couple who plans to get married at the halfway point during a brief ceremony on Tower Bridge.

Scott, meanwhile, is supporting marathon participant and five-time Olympic rowing champion Steve Redgrave's bid to break the world record of 1.25 million pounds ($2.2 million) for individual fundraising.

By the weekend, the duo had already raised close to 900,000 pounds ($1.6 million). *AP*

# Bonds hits first homer this season

DENVER—BARRY BONDS HOMERED FOR THE first time this season, hitting No. 709 of his career to help the San Francisco Giants beat the Colorado Rockies, 6-4, on Saturday.

The slugger sliced a belt-high fastball from right-hander Aaron Cook (1-3) to left field, moving within five home runs of Babe Ruth for the most by a left-handed hitter. It came in Bonds' 31st at-bat and 13th game this year.

For San Francisco's surly star, it was one of his longest droughts to start a season. In 1998, he didn't homer until his 13th game and 50th at-bat, the longest season-opening drought of his career when healthy.

Brad Hennessey (2-0) allowed four runs and five hits in seven innings for the win. Armando Benitez worked the ninth for his first save, striking out Clint Barmes with runners at second and third to end it.

Before the game, the Rockies placed slugger Todd Helton on the 15-day disabled list with a stomach ailment and scratched third baseman Garrett Atkins with a nasty virus that is making its way through the team's clubhouse.

Ray Durham also hit his first homer of the season for the Giants.

"I finally got to swing the bat a bit and it felt good," Bonds said. "They (home runs) come in bunches or they don't come."

In Milwaukee, the Brewers became the first major league team in 40 years to hit five home runs in one inning, and Damian Miller went 4-for-4 with three doubles and five RBIs in Milwaukee's 11-0 rout of Cincinnati. *AP*

# Fed Cup: Russia-Belgium tied; US zooms ahead

LONDON—DEFENDING CHAMPION Russia took advantage of a rusty Kim Clijsters to unexpectedly draw Belgium 1-1 in the Fed Cup quarterfinals on Saturday.

In other ties, France and Italy were also at 1-1 in Nancy, Spain led Austria, 2-0, in Valencia, and the United States was 2-0 up on Germany in Ettenheim.

In a match featuring four players in the top 10 rankings, Russia surprised Belgium by almost winning both opening singles in Liege.

Elena Dementieva upset No. 2-ranked Clijsters, 6-4, 6-3, then Nadia Petrova led Justine Henin-Hardenne a set and 4-4 before succumbing, 6-7 (2), 6-4, 6-3, much to Belgium's relief.

"It was tough after the first set," Henin-Hardenne said. "I fought all the way and it is the only reason I won."

Clijsters hadn't played in a month because of injury, and nor had she stepped out on clay. Dementieva, ranked No. 9, relied on a patient defensive game and confident baseline shots to dominate the US Open champion and silence the sellout crowd of 5,000.

But the crowd got what they came for in the second singles when Henin-Hardenne topped Petrova, breaking the Russian in the final game of the second set and running up a 3-0 lead in the final set.

At Ettenheim, Jamea Jackson won on her Fed Cup debut and Jill Craybas added another victory for the United States to sweep both opening singles against host Germany.

Jackson toppled German No. 1 Anna-Lena Groenefeld, 6-2, 3-6, 7-5, and Craybas saved a match point to defeat Julia Schruff, 4-6, 6-2, 7-5, to put the Americans one win away from a place in the semifinals.

"To be honest, I figured it would probably be 1-1 after today, but tomorrow is another day," United States captain Zina Garrison said.

At Valencia, Anabel Medina Garrigues and Lourdes Dominguez Lino gave five-time champion Spain a 2-0 lead over Austria. *AP*

# Appleby moves into position for 2nd title

HUMBLE, TEXAS—STUART APPLEBY REmained in position to join Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson as the only two-time winners on the US PGA Tour this year, shooting a 3-under 69 to take a two-stroke lead in the Shell Houston Open on Saturday.

Appleby had five birdies in his third straight sub-70 round at The Tournament Course at Redstone to finish at 14 under. The Australian bogeyed the difficult 18th, a hole he birdied at the end of a 66 in the first round.

Sweden's Mathias Gronberg birdied the 18th for a 67 and a 12-under total. Jerry Smith (69) and Bob Estes (66) were four shots back at 10 under.

"There's a lot of golf, 25 percent of the tournament still left out there," Appleby said. "I might be leading—but that only means that I'm leading."

He won the season-opening Mercedes Championships at Kapalua for the third straight year and felt a similar level of confidence this week.

"There's a feeling. It's a confident feeling that you like the way your game feels," Appleby said. "Most of the time, all the Kapaluas, I've come in, I've liked the way I've played and putted. Kapalua has bred confidence in me. There's a theme there."

Appleby was one of 44 players who finished the rain-delayed second round on Saturday morning. He parred his two remaining holes for a 67 to finish at 11 under, then opened his third round with three straight pars. *AP*

# Annika back on top

## J-Ro fires 70, trails by 11 strokes

**STOCKBRIDGE, GEORGIA—SHRUGGING OFF A couple of rain delays, Annika Sorenstam shot an 8-under 64—her third straight round in the 60s—to move to the top of the leaderboard in the Florida's Natural Charity Championship on Saturday.**

SORENSTAM waves to the crowd.
REUTERS

"It's been a long day. A very long day," said Sorenstam, who finished up in the next-to-last group just as the sun was dipping below the trees at the Eagle's Landing Country Club south of Atlanta. "But I'm very happy with my score. I thought I played some good golf."

Filipino Jennifer Rosales fired a 70 and stood 11 shots off pace at 208. She is currently tied with Brandie Burton for 14th and 15th places.

A year ago, Sorenstam had essentially wrapped up this tournament by the end of the third round, taking a 10-stroke lead to Sunday and winning by the same margin. This time, she went into the final 18 holes with a one-stroke cushion over 36-hole leader Sung Ah Yim, who posted a bogey-free 68.

"It's a little bit of a different situation than last year," Sorenstam said. "But having said that, I'm in great shape for tomorrow."

Indeed, it would be a major surprise if she doesn't hang on to the lead.

Sorenstam is the only two-time winner of this event, and now she has a chance to be the first to win it back-to-back. She's homing in on her second US LPGA Tour win of the year and 68th of her Hall of Fame career.

Contrast that with Yim, a 22-year-old South Korean who's in just her second year on the US tour and has never finished higher than third. And what about the rest of the field? No one else was within five shots of Sorenstam's 17-under total of 199.

"She's really better than me," Yim acknowledged.

The start of the third round was delayed 45 minutes by rain, and play was halted again for nearly 1½ hours while thunderstorms moved through the area. The rest of the round was played in mostly sunny conditions, though the final groups barely had enough daylight to finish up.

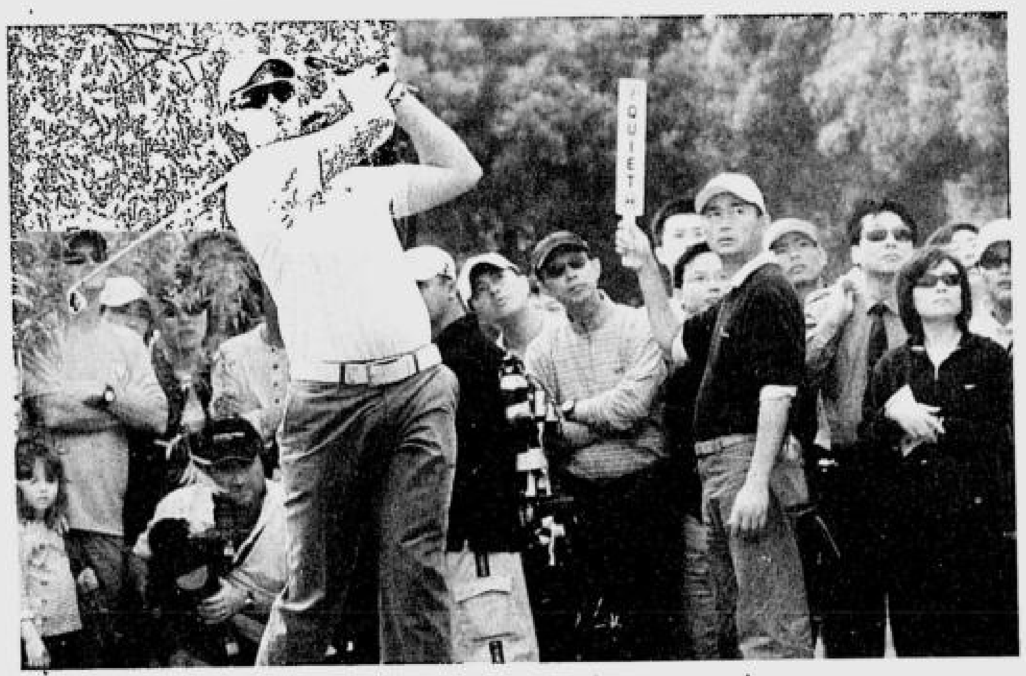
"The last four holes, we were playing straight into the sun and straight into the wind," Sorenstam said. "I was looking at the clock, hoping, wondering, 'Can we finish today?' It would have been quite a tough day (Sunday) if we couldn't finish, have to get up early, finish and then start over."

After teeing off late, Sorenstam was forced back to the clubhouse after playing a couple of holes. But she got things rolling with four straight birdies to finish the front nine, sinking three testy putts from 9 to 12 feet.

Sorenstam scrambled at the end for the lead. She hit two bunkers on No. 17, but managed to sink a 12-foot putt to save par. Then, going for the green with her second shot at the par-5 18th, her ball clipped an oak tree overhanging the fairway and fell to the ground along with a limb.

"My caddie told me not to get too cute," Sorenstam said. "He told me, 'Just get it on the green. You're putting well.' That's what I did." *AP*

ROSALES: Top-20 finish in sight.
REUTERS



HENRIK Stenson plays from the rough after taking a drop on a penalty.
AFP

# Fernandez-Castano nips Stenson in playoff; Miñoza finishes 7 down

SHANGHAI, CHINA—SPAIN'S GONzalo Fernandez-Castano tapped in a six-inch birdie putt on the first playoff hole Sunday to beat Henrik Stenson and win the Asian Open.

Stenson set the pace after the first three rounds, but Fernandez-Castano grabbed the lead on the 16th hole of the final round after chipping in from the sand for birdie.

Filipino Frankie Miñoza finished with a 288, seven strokes off the lead, after firing a 71. He was in a tie for 21st to 25th places.

Playing partner Stenson then made birdie on the 18th to level the score at 7-under-par and force the playoff.

Fernandez-Castano shot a 2-under-par 70 on the final round, carding two crucial birdies against no bogies.

Scotland's Colin Montgomerie and Jose-Filipe Lima of Portugal were tied for third at six-under, followed by Mahal Pearce of New Zealand and Englishmen Simon Dyson and Paul Casey.

Stenson held a three-stroke lead until the ninth hole, when he hit a tree and blew two shots trying to escape the rough. His chip to save landed on the lower tier of the green, leaving him to three-putt the hole for a triple-bogey eight.

That wobble left him in a tussle with six other players, with the lead changing hands no less than four times. He added another birdie and a bogie to finish at 1-under-par 71 for the day.

The tournament's finish couldn't have been more different than last year's, when Ernie Els left the pack mid-tournament to win by 13 strokes.

The lowest round of the tournament, a 65, went to Terry Pilkadaris, who hadn't even broken par in the first three rounds. *AP*

# *Lack of success doesn't mean Chinese golfers aren't trying, says pro*

SHANGHAI, CHINA—JUST BECAUSE CHInese golfers aren't winning international competitions doesn't mean they aren't trying, says one of the country's top pros.

"We're all working as hard as we can. The competition is just very tough in these competitions," Liang Wenchong said on the sidelines of the Asian Open.

Liang was the only player from the host country to make the cut at the Open, ultimately finishing tied for 49th place at five-over-par on Sunday.

It was the second consecutive tournament held in China in which just a sole Chinese player survived until the weekend. Only last month's TCL Classic on the southern resort island of Hainan could boast more than one Chinese player on the final day—both Liang and Li Chao made the cut there.

Liang said Chinese players were hampered by a lack of opportunity to compete internationally.

"Golf is a long process, you really need the right environment," said Liang, who at No. 40 is the highest ranked Chinese player on the Asian Tour Order of Merit.

"It's important for young players just to have the experience of playing with the big guns in these tournaments," Liang said.

The lack of success among Chinese players is an issue for the sport's promoters, who are still looking for a breakaway star to take up the mantle of 40-year-old Zhang Lianwei, the most successful Chinese player to date.

"It's definitely a concern," said Jochen Goller, the head of China marketing for BMW, which sponsored the Asian Open and is helping fund a regional initiative by Nick Faldo to find and nurture young golfers. A China tour that was started last year is also doubling its number of tournaments to eight next year.

"We need to give it some time, but I'm very sure we will see some Chinese players in the top-20," Goller said. *AP*

# Riviera Invitational up April 27

MORE THAN 400 MEMBERS AND GUESTS are set to tee it up in the 8th Riviera Golf Club Invitational Tournament on April 27-30 at the Langer and Couples courses of Riviera in Silang, Cavite.

Heading the cast are defending champions Oca Decipeda and Nelson Ng, who took the overall title last year and will be bidding to become the first pair to claim back-to-back titles.

The Riviera Invitational is the annual member-guest tournament of the Silang, Cavite based golf club and it features the traditional Calcutta on the evening of the 28th of April where teams will engage in a bidding war to bet on their chances to win the tournament.

The format for the Couples course will be the net aggregate score of the team converted to Stableford points while on the Langer course the alternate shots (one-ball twosome) format will be used.

"The end of April will be the culmination of all our preparations for the Invitational and we expect nothing but a great week of competition and celebrations," said Cesar Jayme the chair of the club's board of directors.

On board as the main sponsor of the tournament is Smart Communications while Ford Alabang is putting up a Ford Focus as a hole-in-one prize on all the par 3's. Asiana Airlines with a US west coast round-trip ticket and Turf Company with a golf cart will double up the hole-in-one prizes on specified holes.

A Ford Focus will be raffled off to the participants during the awarding ceremonies which will again be staged in the traditional Barrio Fiesta motif. Mizuno is the main equipment sponsor while the other sponsors are Pagcor, Pacsports, Teriyaki Boy, Coca Cola and Citimotors.

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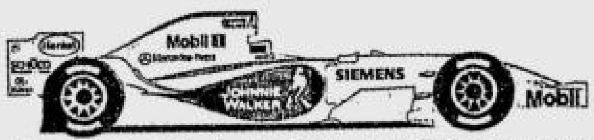

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# Schumacher sets F1 pole record

IMOLA, ITALY—MICHAEL SCHUMACHER SAW FERRARI'S FIRST WIN OF THE SEASON IN HIS grasp on Saturday after securing one of the few Formula One records not already his.

The 37-year-old's 66th career pole position allowed him to overtake Brazilian Ayrton Senna's mark of 65 set the day before the triple champion died at the same Imola circuit in the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix.

Schumacher won the race for Benetton that black afternoon and, 12 years on, the prospect of an 86th victory appeared to fill him with more excitement than the afternoon's historic feat.

"It is very nice to be back on pole again and of course the fact it is my 66th and so a new record is something very special for me," said the seven-time champ who has not won since June last year.

He already had the most wins, titles, points and fastest laps, as well as other records such as the most wins in a season (13), most successive wins in a single season (seven) and most podiums (143).

If the German continues next year he could also take the record for race starts from Riccardo Patrese. The retired Italian racer had 256 to Schumacher's current tally of 234.

Schumacher, dominant in 2004, has not won since topping the US Grand Prix. *Reuters*

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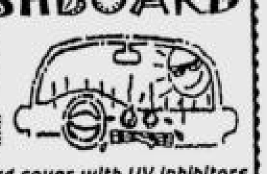

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## Aga tells good friend Sharon to lose weight

By Marinel R. Cruz

AGA MUHLACH IS determined to lose weight.

He's so into it, in fact, that he's been encouraging close friends to do the same if they need to.

Among these friends is singer-actress Sharon Cuneta.

"I told her it's wrong to think that people should accept you just the way you are. I said we owed it to the public to look good," the award-winning actor told INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview on Thursday. "I said to her, 'if you want to go on making movies, it's your responsibility to your fans to stay fit."

In a previous interview with INQUIRER, Sharon admitted that she was unable to shed weight as fast as she'd like to. She gained the most weight, she said, after giving birth to her third child, Miel. She said she was currently on the South Beach diet.

Aga pointed out: "It's not easy, especially for those of us who have been heavy for quite a while. Losing weight definitely takes time after many years of not working out, of just eating and doing nothing. I played basketball recently and I couldn't move freely. My knees have started to ache because of all the weight they're carrying."

Aga and Sharon are about to do a movie for Star Cinema, to be directed by Lauren Dyogi. "It will be an adult romance film, and will be

AGA/ A2-5

AGA Muhlach: "We owe it to the fans." RUDY ESPERAS

DENNIS Trillo in "Pamahiin."

## Fear of the familiar, murder and mystery

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
*Contributor*

**REVIEW**

DESPITE SEVERAL CLICHÉ-FILLED SEquences, the new screamer "Pamahiin" is competently crafted.

Directed by newcomer Rahyan Carlos, nephew of late filmmaker Luciano "Chaning" Carlos, the horror flick takes its sweet time questioning local superstitious customs while showing a mystical underbelly that provides the fear-inducing elements. There are ghosts, murder mysteries and metaphysical melodrama mashed into an atmospheric art piece that isn't always scary when it means to be.

This is largely because we've seen some of these concepts tackled exceptionally well before. The whole "Sixth Sense" or he's-been-dead-for-ten-years twist had gotten ancient by the time it became a joke in "Friends" years ago. So is the idea that the skeptic-turned-believer here, *balikbayan* Noah (Dennis Trillo), has to be in a state of denial for a long time before accepting that he and his girlfriend Eileen (Iya Villania) have been targeted by the homicidal undead. But again, while the man-versus-the-unknown aspect ends up the way it's expected to, it can't be denied that both story and premise were handled deftly.

The old townsfolk's superstitions about death play a big part in connecting the unexplained apparitions of Noah's recently deceased friend Damian (Paolo Contis) with the reappearance of another childhood friend, the beautiful outcast Becca (Marian Rivera). Subsequent mishaps are blamed on Noah's vocal disregard for these superstitions which, the town elders believe, carries corresponding penalties. The psychically attuned Eileen, unfortunately, is on the receiving end of said consequences, which turn her into Haley Joel Osment—now she can see dead, disfigured people.

It's a relief that Villania isn't the loud, hyperactive TV host and veejay here; she's efficiently the twang-y, appreciable would-be victim that works well opposite Trillo's calm and reluctant problem-solver. Director Carlos and co-screenwriter Andrew Paredes' script uses credible dialogue; it's easy to comprehend and accept what the characters are saying. They also refrain, thankfully, from doing stilted declamation pieces or losing themselves in corny chatter that belabor the obvious.

Contis makes one menacing-looking ghoul, and the editing made sure of that. But why can't local movie ghosts look totally removed from the overused image of the starch-pale, glaring and

FEAR/ A2-5

MURAL in the FPJ Hall of Mowelfund Museum RODEL ROTONI

## FPJ: Nationalist or artist?

### How RP movies' Da King made it to the lauded list

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE INCLUSION OF A MOVIE ACTOR IN the list of nominees for National Artist had previously raised eyebrows.

Undeterred, Boots Anson-Roa, executive director of the Movie Workers Welfare Foundation Inc. (Mowelfund), drafted a concept paper titled "Fernando Poe Jr.: The Icon as Compleat Artist."

(FPJ's nomination was supported by the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences.)

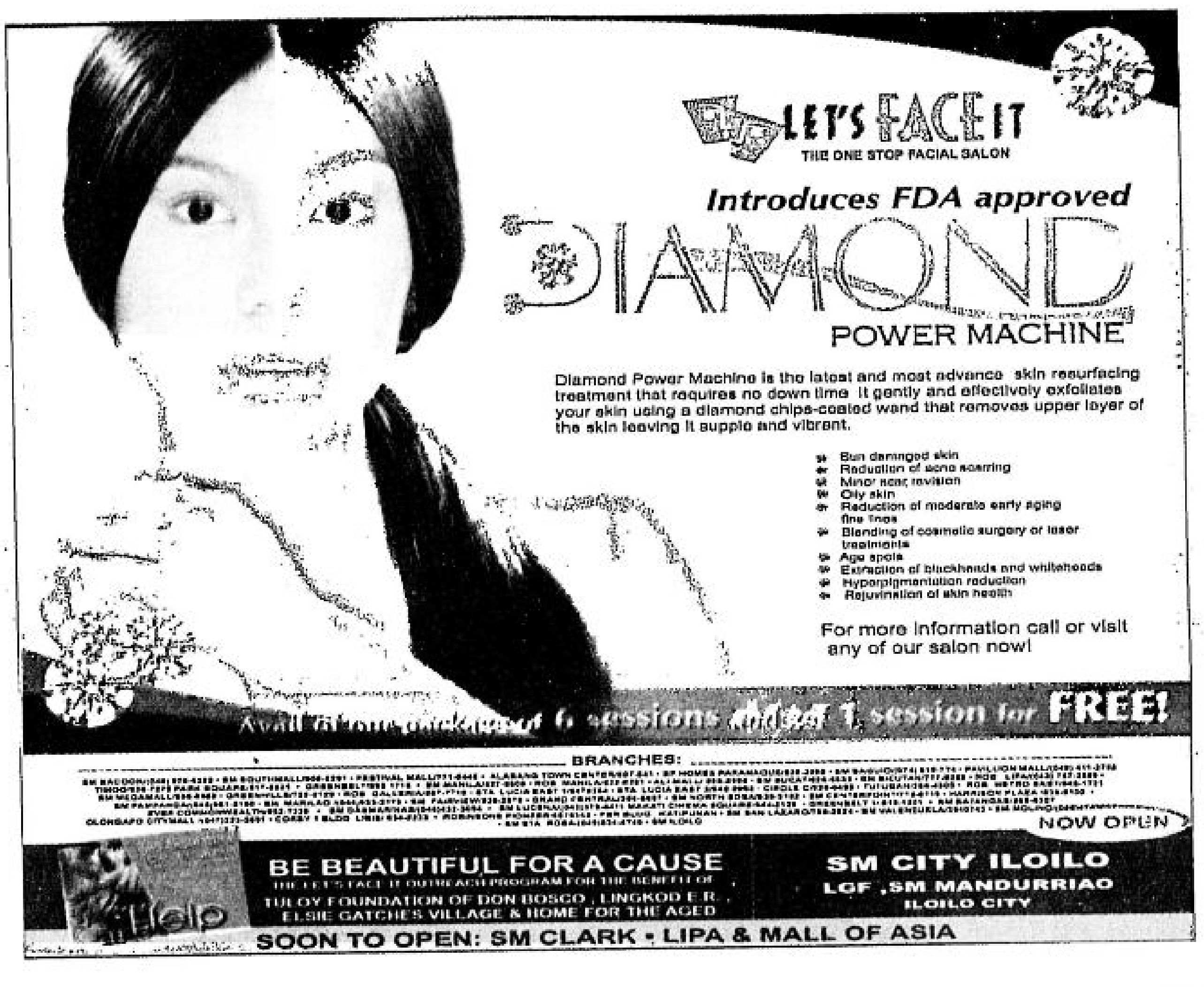
Roa recalled: "The paper was submitted as part of the requirements for National Artist. We at Mowelfund also prepared a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation shown to the joint boards of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines on March 24."

"Nerve-wracking" was how Roa described her time in front of the panelists, which included colleagues Nestor U. Torre and Behn Cervantes. "It was like defending a thesis."

Early this month, Poe made history as the first movie actor to be elevated to the Order of National Artists.

"Previous honorees from the film industry have all been directors—Gerry de Leon, Lamberto Avellana, Lino Brocka, Ishmael Bernal and Eddie Romero," Roa explained. "Actress Atang de la Rama was honored for her work in the *zarzuela*. Likewise, Rolando Tinio received his award for theater and literature."

FPJ/ A2-3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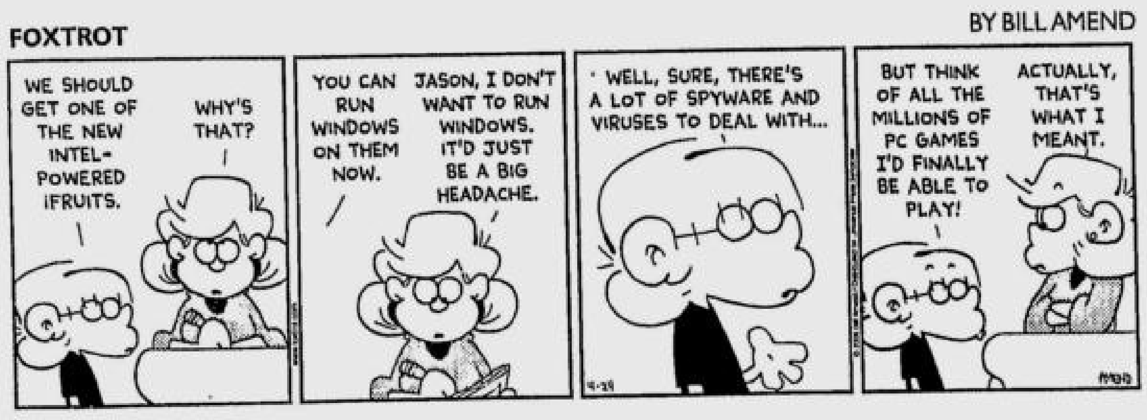
# COMICRelief

e-mail feedback at arts@inquirer.com.ph

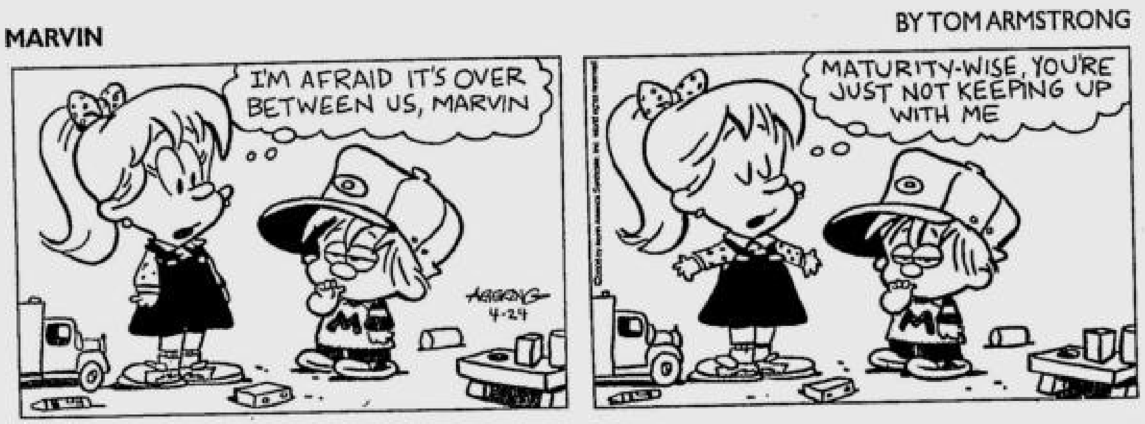
## FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WE SHOULD GET ONE OF THE NEW INTEL-POWERED IFRUITS.
WHY'S THAT?
YOU CAN RUN WINDOWS ON THEM NOW.
JASON, I DON'T WANT TO RUN WINDOWS. IT'D JUST BE A BIG HEADACHE.
WELL, SURE, THERE'S A LOT OF SPYWARE AND VIRUSES TO DEAL WITH...
BUT THINK OF ALL THE MILLIONS OF PC GAMES I'D FINALLY BE ABLE TO PLAY!
ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHAT I MEANT.
4-24

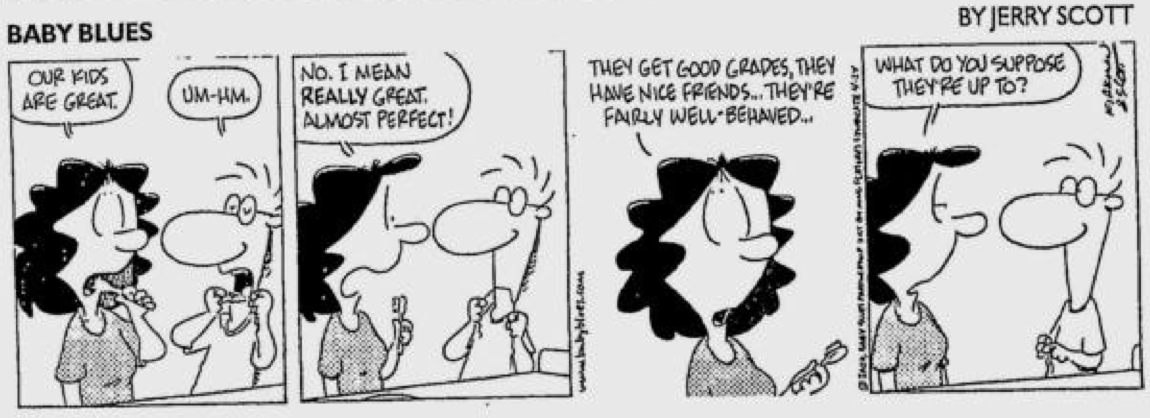
## MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M AFRAID IT'S OVER BETWEEN US, MARVIN
ARMSTRONG 4-24
MATURITY-WISE, YOU'RE JUST NOT KEEPING UP WITH ME

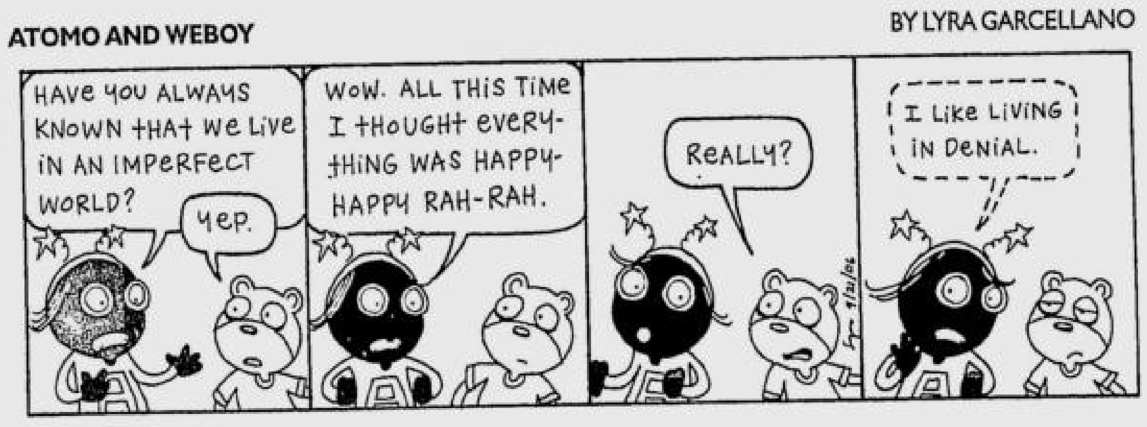
## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


OUR KIDS ARE GREAT.
UM-HM.
NO. I MEAN REALLY GREAT. ALMOST PERFECT!
THEY GET GOOD GRADES, THEY HAVE NICE FRIENDS.. THEY'RE FAIRLY WELL-BEHAVED...
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE THEY'RE UP TO?
www.babyblues.com

## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HAVE YOU ALWAYS KNOWN THAT WE LIVE IN AN IMPERFECT WORLD?
YEP.
WOW. ALL THIS TIME I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS HAPPY-HAPPY RAH-RAH.
REALLY?
I LIKE LIVING IN DENIAL.

## HOROSCOPE

### BY FRANCIS DRAKE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You have great people skills! You're warm, intelligent and friendly. You love nature, beauty and the arts. You're determined and hard-working. You have high standards for yourself and take your responsibilities seriously. You are constantly learning. It's important to let go of something this year. You have to create room for something new to come into your life.

**Birthdate of:** Chipper Jones, baseballer; Barbra Streisand, singer/actress; Shirley MacLaine, actress/dancer.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** Money issues make you feel broke today. But this could be attitude. Perhaps nothing much has changed since last week—it's just how you feel?

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Parents and family members create obstacles for you today. You will have to be patient with this. Do not ride roughshod over others. Find out what they want.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** Today you might be your own worst enemy. You're worried about something. This worry erodes your self-confidence. Try to relax, because fortunately, this negative thinking is gone by tomorrow.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** A group or a friend seems to block your financial ambitions today. Perhaps you want to buy something? Perhaps you want to earn money in a new way? You don't have to listen to others.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** Avoid difficult discussions with parents and bosses today. You will meet with opposition. This opposition will subside in a day or two, so don't go looking for a fight.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** Don't let others discourage your travel plans or your ideas related to education, publishing and the law. Just believe in what you intended to do.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** This is a poor day to ask to borrow something from someone. People will not be openhanded or charitable. Wait a day or two, and ask then.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** Conversations with partners are stifled and difficult today. You feel someone wants to shut you down. Perhaps someone feels this way about you? Be gentle and tolerant.

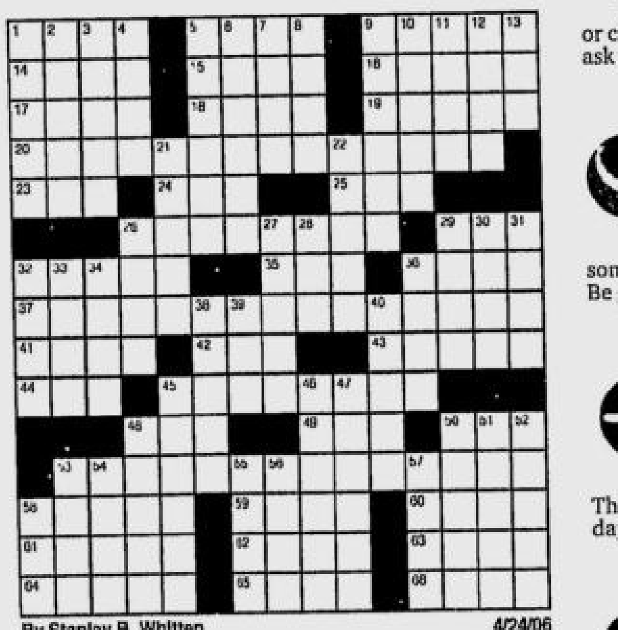
**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Authority figures are difficult today. No matter what you try, your efforts seem to be blocked by others. These obstacles will disappear in a day or two. Be patient.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** You feel weary with the responsibilities for others, especially children. Nevertheless, you will meet your responsibilities because you know this is character-building.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Disagreements with parents and family members might discourage you. Don't even go there. Avoid these discussions. Think positive thoughts.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** It's easy to worry too much or feel critical of others today. Basically this is just a negative state of mind. Don't act when you feel this way. Wait until it passes. (Because it will.)

## DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

4/24/06

**ACROSS**

1 Diplomat's asset
5 Lake in northern Italy
9 Skater's edge
14 Woody Guthrie's boy
15 D.C. office of note
16 Desert refuges
17 Enjoy a book
18 Reign
19 Portents
20 Day/MacRae musical
23 Blackjack
24 Two-finger sign
25 DDE's opponent
26 Heart rhythm
29 Harmless cyst
32 Song of exultation
35 Anger
36 Drill
37 1954 Oscar winner
41 Organic compound
42 Expression of derision
43 Assistants
44 Weekday abbr.
45 Canine rest stop?
48 Catch some rays
49 Operated
50 Middle Eastern grp.
53 Willie Nelson classic
58 Close in poetry
59 Surrounded by
60 Sisters
61 Snow unit
62 __ en scene
63 Toward shelter
64 President before Polk
65 Hip ending?
66 Lemony

**DOWN**

1 Edible tubers
2 Sports place
3 Part of a vise
4 Fuss
5 Eye membrane
6 Prefertilization seeds
7 Mauritania neighbor
8 Cassini of fashion
9 Knitted shoe
10 Ewe's offspring
11 On the briny
12 Declare untrue
13 Last letter of words?
21 Of sheep
22 More fit
26 Actress Arlene
27 Ten-percent donation
28 Mine find
29 Lumber
30 Sea eagle
31 Snares
32 Verse
33 Part of A.D.
34 Collar choice
36 Sailor's jail
38 High-pitched hum
39 Bern's river
40 Animals of a region
45 Tyrannical leader
46 Kudos
47 Series of ranked stages
48 Vertical post
50 Choreographer Abdul
51 Cruise ship
52 Beginning
53 Just
54 "Hud" star Patricia
55 Leaders of flocks
56 Leave out
57 Insect pest
58 To the rear

**Saturday's Puzzle Solved**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S | M | A | R | T | S | ■ | S | T | A | N | C | H | E | S |
| T | O | R | E | R | O | ■ | A | R | B | O | R | I | S | T |
| O | R | I | G | I | N | ■ | R | E | C | R | E | A | T | E |
| R | A | D | I | O | G | R | A | M | ■ | M | E | L | E | E |
| A | L | E | S | ■ | S | E | N | O | R | ■ | K | E | L | P |
| G | E | S | T | S | ■ | V | A | L | E | ■ | S | A | L | E |
| E | S | T | E | E | M | ■ | C | O | S | T | ■ | H | E | N |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | R | E | A | P | ■ | S | E | A | M | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| C | B | S | ■ | S | L | A | P | ■ | W | R | A | P | U | P |
| H | E | A | P | ■ | T | R | A | P | ■ | O | R | O | N | O |
| E | D | G | E | ■ | S | A | R | A | H | ■ | I | R | A | N |
| E | M | I | T | S | ■ | K | A | R | A | T | E | K | I | D |
| T | A | T | T | O | O | E | D | ■ | R | E | T | I | R | E |
| A | T | T | E | N | D | E | E | ■ | M | C | T | E | E | R |
| H | E | A | D | S | E | T | S | ■ | S | H | A | R | D | S |

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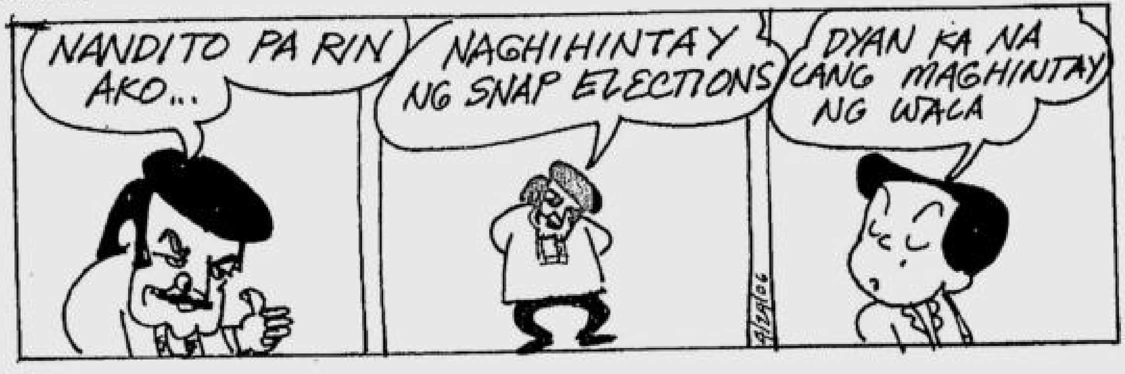
4/24/06

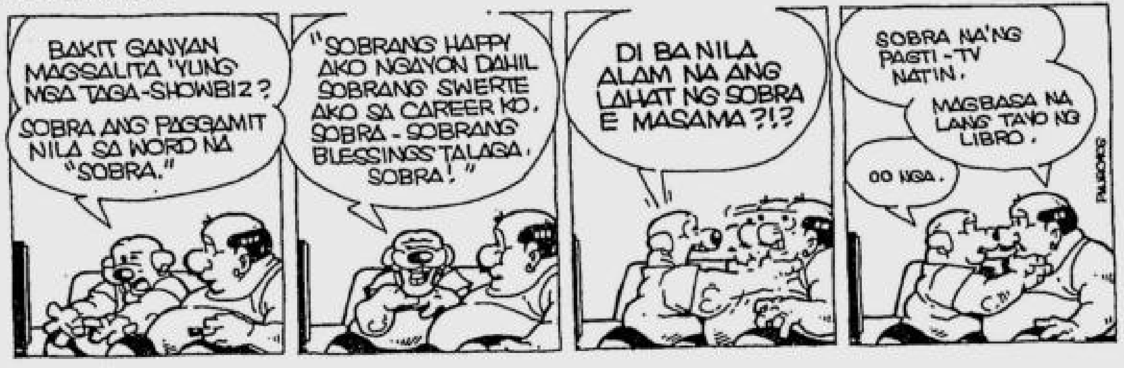
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NANDITO PA RIN AKO...
NAGHIHINTAY NG SNAP ELECTIONS
4/24/06
DYAN KA NA LANG MAGHINTAY NG WALA

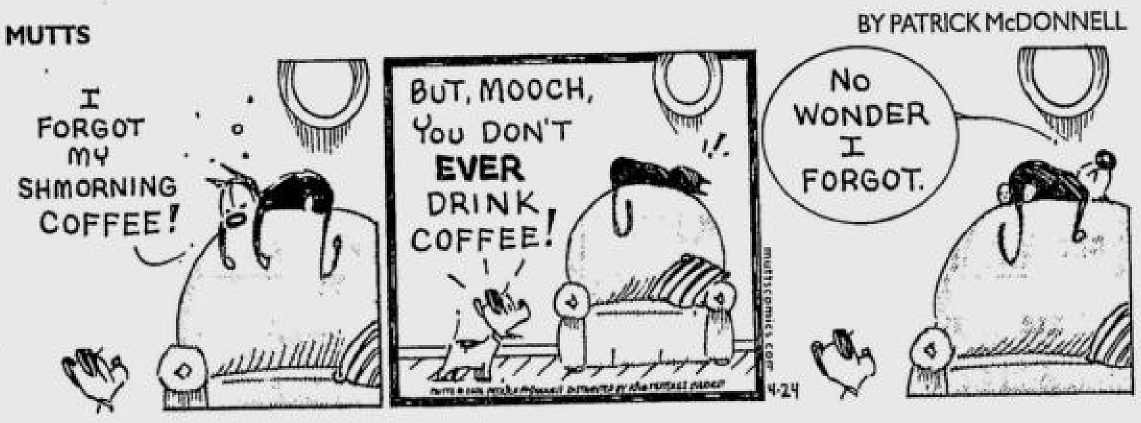
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BAKIT GANYAN MAGSALITA 'YUNG MGA TAGA-SHOWBIZ?
SOBRA ANG PAGGAMIT NILA SA WORD NA "SOBRA."
"SOBRANG HAPPY AKO NGAYON DAHIL SOBRANG SWERTE AKO SA CAREER KO. SOBRA-SOBRANG BLESSINGS TALAGA. SOBRA!"
DI BA NILA ALAM NA ANG LAHAT NG SOBRA E MASAMA?!?
SOBRA NA'NG PAGTI-TV NATIN.
MAGBASA NA LANG TAYO NG LIBRO.
OO NGA.
PMJUNIOR

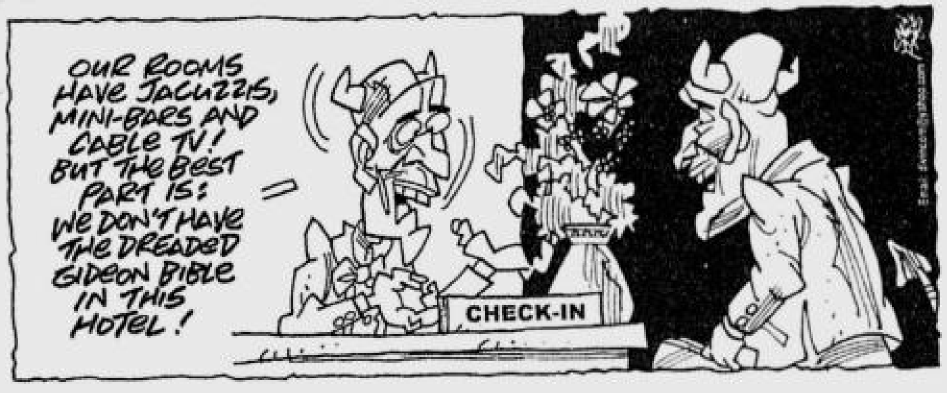
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I FORGOT MY SHMORNING COFFEE!
BUT, MOOCH, YOU DON'T EVER DRINK COFFEE!
!/.
muttscomics.com
4-24
NO WONDER I FORGOT.

## DIVINE COMEDY

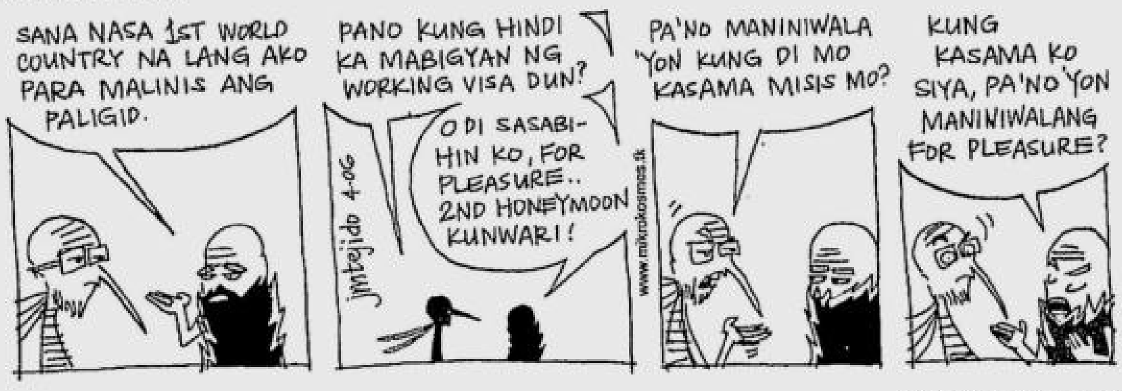
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


OUR ROOMS HAVE JACUZZIS, MINI-BARS AND CABLE TV! BUT THE BEST PART IS: WE DON'T HAVE THE DREADED GIDEON BIBLE IN THIS HOTEL!
CHECK-IN

**HOTEL FOR DEMONS**

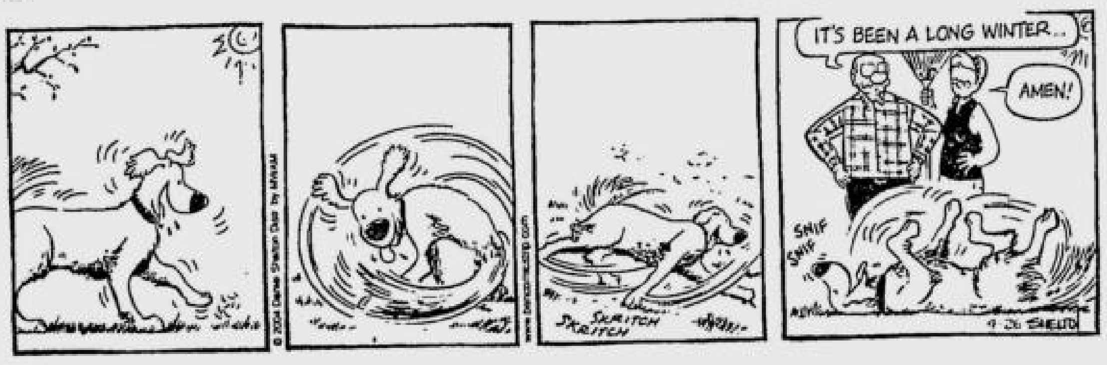
## MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SANA NASA 1ST WORLD COUNTRY NA LANG AKO PARA MALINIS ANG PALIGID.
PANO KUNG HINDI KA MABIGYAN NG WORKING VISA DUN?
O DI SASABIHIN KO, FOR PLEASURE.. 2ND HONEYMOON KUNWARI!
jmtejido 4-06
www.mikrokosmos.tk
PA'NO MANINIWALA 'YON KUNG DI MO KASAMA MISIS MO?
KUNG KASAMA KO SIYA, PA'NO 'YON MANINIWALANG FOR PLEASURE?

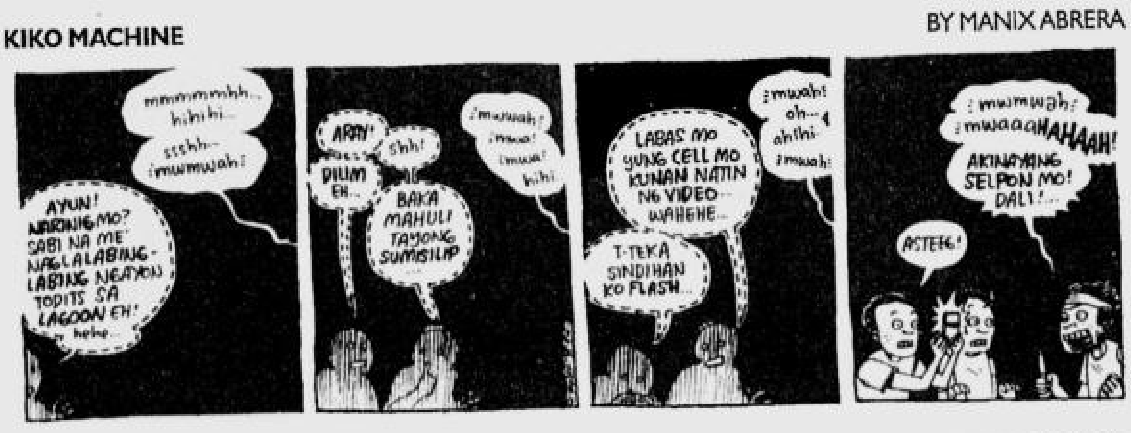
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SKRITCH SKRITCH
SNIF SNIF
IT'S BEEN A LONG WINTER..
AMEN!

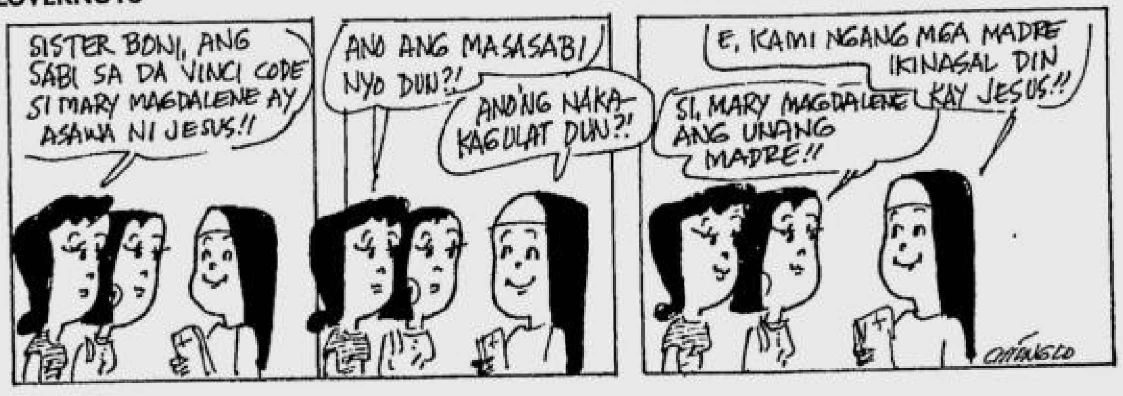
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


mmmmmhh.. hihihi..
ssshh.. ¡mumwah!
AYUN! NARINIG MO? SABI NA ME NAGLALABING-LABING NGAYON TODITS SA LAGOON EH! hehe..
ARAY!
Shh!
DILIM EH..
¡mwuah! ¡mwa! ¡mwa! hihi
BAKA MAHULI TAYONG SUMISILIP
LABAS MO YUNG CELL MO KUNAN NATIN NG VIDEO.. WAHEHE..
¡mwah! oh... ahihi ¡mwah!
T-TEKA SINDIHAN KO FLASH..
¡mumwah! ¡mwaaaHAHAAH!
AKINAYANG SELPON MO! DALI!..
ASTEEG!

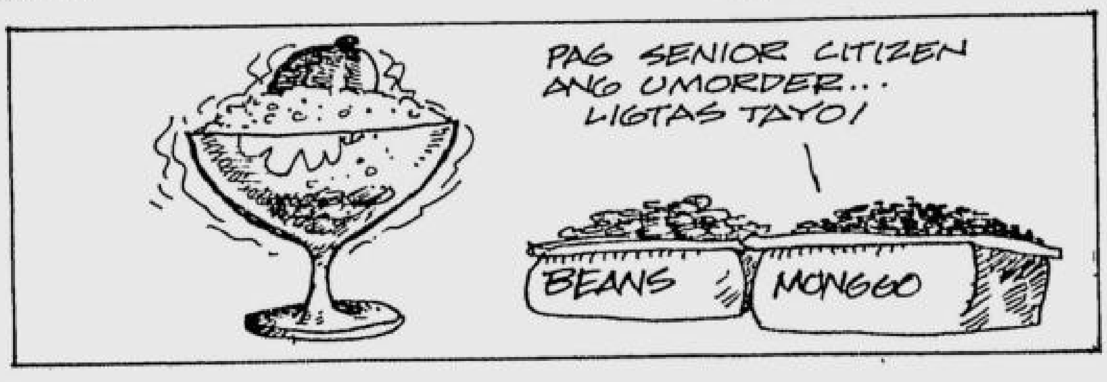
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, ANG SABI SA DA VINCI CODE SI MARY MAGDALENE AY ASAWA NI JESUS!!
ANO ANG MASASABI NYO DUN?!
ANO'NG NAKAGULAT DUN?!
E, KAMI NGANG MGA MADRE IKINASAL DIN KAY JESUS!!
SI, MARY MAGDALENE ANG UNANG MADRE!!
CHIONGLO

## TULDOK

· BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PAG SENIOR CITIZEN ANG UMORDER... LIGTAS TAYO!
BEANS
MONGGO

# FPJ: Nationalist or artist?

'It is difficult to separate the man from the artist, the real from the reel'

BOOTS Anson-Roa and Susan Roces at the inauguration of the FPJ Hall, dedicated to National Artists for Film, like Lamberto Avellana and Gerry de Leon (background). RODEL ROTONI

From page A2-1

Roa provided INQUIRER Entertainment a copy of the concept paper, in which she described the late Action King as "a multi-awarded actor, producer, story/scriptwriter and widely recognized industry leader."

## 3 points

In her paper, she raised three main points in support of Poe's inclusion in the honor roll: "He contributed significantly to the [country's] cultural heritage... He promoted creative expression which spawned the development of a national cultural identity, particularly, that of Juan de la Cruz as folk hero... He dedicated 50 of his 65 years to the film industry... "

In his filmography, Roa noted, FPJ often portrayed the quiet underdog ("Asedillo," "Totoy Bato," "Eseng ng Tondo") or the mythical hero ("Panday," "Ang Alamat," "Sto. Domingo").

## Liberator

His screen characters often "redeemed themselves from social injustice... and liberated his townspeople from oppression and the bondage of poverty."

Roa pointed out that "it is difficult to separate the man from the artist... the real from the reel... [because] as story and screenplay writer and director, [his movie] characters are derived from his persona; rather than his persona being subsumed in celluloid heroism."

She invoked scholarly studies by film historians Joven Velasco and Alfonso Desa.

## Fantasies

The latter acknowledged that FPJ's screen exploits as folk hero allow the masses "to live out [their] intimate dreams and fantasies as a people."

Velasco lauded FPJ's filmic ideology of youth empowerment: "[to] free them from hero worship... [because] true liberation... [rests] largely in their own hands."

Film producer Marichu Maceda, a close ally of Poe and his wife Susan Roces, opined: "FPJ is a nationalist first and an artist second. I hope people will look beyond his awards as actor/director and seriously study his body of work."

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4 PAMAHIIN

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2 D' LUCKY ONES
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2 D' LUCKY ONES
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1 BASIC INSTINCT-2
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4 D' LUCKY ONES

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2 MOMENTS OF LOVE
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4 PAMAHIIN

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3 SUBMERGED 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
4 THE COOLER 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
5 D' LUCKY ONES 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
6 EIGHT BELOW 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
7 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
8 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
9 ICE AGE 2 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
10 MOMENTS OF LOVE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

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1 ICE AGE 2 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50
2 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
3 AMERICAN SOLDIER 12:35 3:00
BASIC INSTINCT 2 5:15 7:35 10:00
4 PAMAHIIN 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 SUBMERGED 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
6 EIGHT BELOW 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 D' LUCKY ONES 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

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1 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE 1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00
2 ICE AGE 2 12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00
3 D' LUCKY ONES 11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
4 BASIC INSTINCT 2 12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00
5 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9.00
6 MOMENTS OF LOVE 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
7 EIGHT BELOW 1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00
8 PAMAHIIN 11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

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3 EIGHT BELOW
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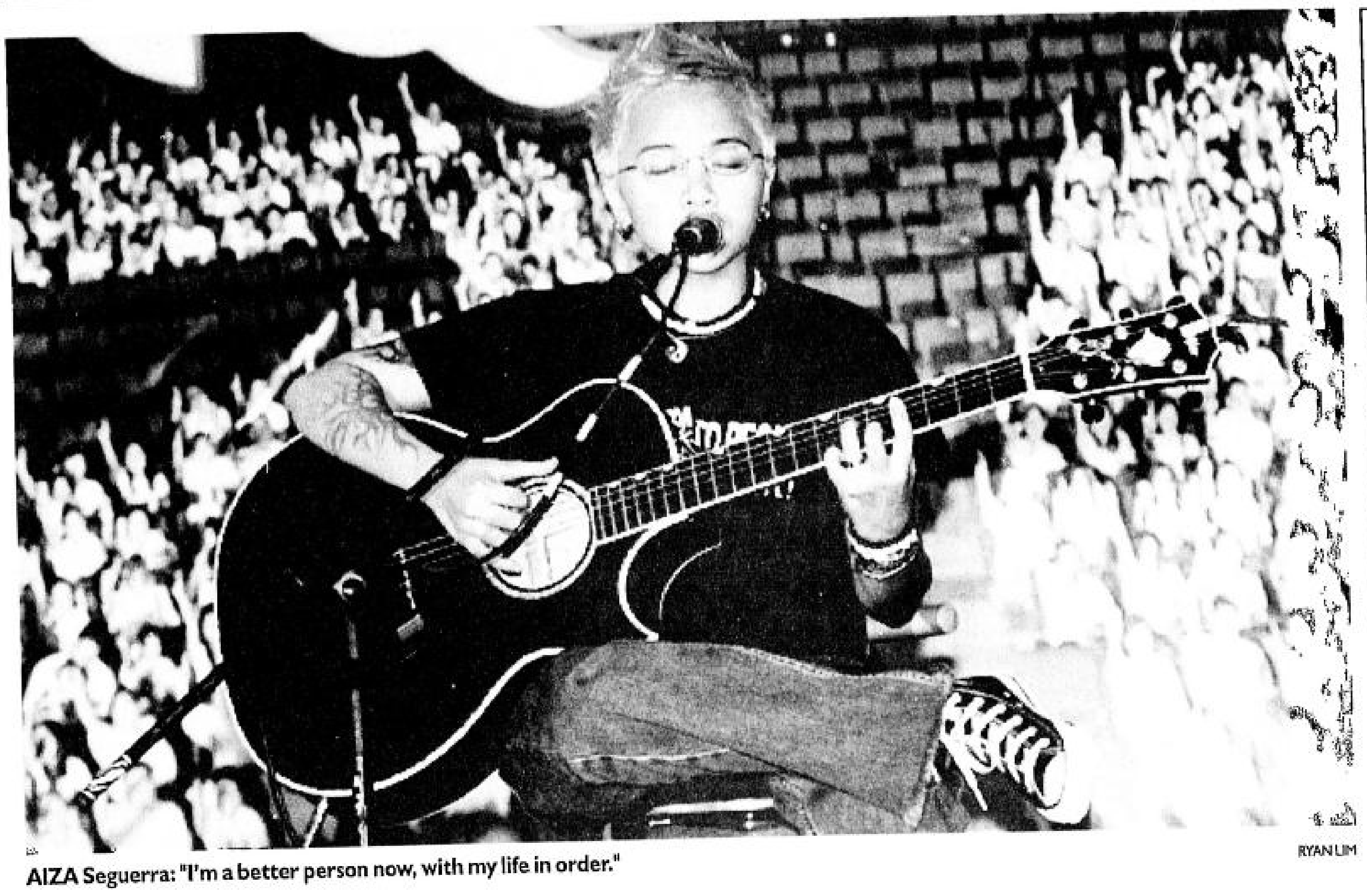


RYAN LIM

**AIZA Seguerra: "I'm a better person now, with my life in order."**

## The reticent Aiza Seguerra opens up—okay, just a little

**By Bayani San Diego Jr.**

FOR SOMEONE WHO GREW UP IN SHOW BIZ, Aiza Seguerra still seems unused to attention.

She was initially reticent when INQUIRER Entertainment caught up with her. With a little coaxing, however, she opened up about her friend and mentor Vic Sotto, growing up on the set of "Okay Ka, Fairy Ko," her pet dogs, her mom and her current relationship.

Perhaps it helped that girlfriend Chen and pet Shih Tzu Motchong were around. After all, Aiza herself has said she has become a new person because of these loves of her life.

**What are you doing at the moment?**

Several concerts for this month and next. And I'm a regular judge for ABS-CBN's talent show "Little Big Star."

**Do you have a new album?**

Maybe soon. I plan to go independent but I'm not sure yet.

**What can we expect from the new album, musically?**

Still the same sound (acoustic pop), but with a slight change. What that will be, I don't know yet.

**How have you grown as an artist?**

I'm no longer afraid to tackle songs that have depth, or to try different arrangements. I'm also more focused now.

In fact, I want to be more involved in my next album. Apart from singing, I also want to venture into the other aspects of recording process. Like producing, maybe… I'd like to work behind the scenes.

**What's the CD in your player right now?**

My iPod, you mean? All the albums of The Beatles. Different types of music. There's rock n' roll, classical, *iba-iba*.

**Before Motchong, you had a pet iguana?**

I had two iguanas. *Pero namaalam na sila sa mundong ibabaw* (They've said goodbye to this world). Now I have 13 dogs at home, different breeds—two Shih Tzus, a Dachshund, a Labrador, a Chow Chow and several *askal* (mongrels).

**Your partner likes dogs, too?**

Yah.

**How are you adjusting in this new relationship?**

Well, I don't really talk about it.

**But how has it changed you as a performer?**

A lot. It has changed me in a huge way—not just as a performer, but also as a person. I think I'm a better person now.

**In what way?**

In many ways. When I look at the new me and compare it with the old me, I can see and I can tell… I know that my life is in order now.

**One lesson from this relationship?**

Well, that it takes work.

**Patience, you mean? Which you can also apply to your work?**

Yes. You should always put your heart into everything. Never force yourself. When you do something, you should do it wholeheartedly and you should enjoy every minute of it.

**How's you mom? She used to go with you everywhere.**

My mommy and daddy are okay. When I turned 18, she started to let go. Good thing she's now busy with her own extra-curricular activities. She's a fitness buff. In the morning, she teaches aerobics to senior citizens. In the evening, she goes ballroom dancing.

**You worked with your original TV mom, Alice Dixson, in your last movie, "Enteng Kabisote 2."**

I was so happy the first time I saw her on the set. But now she's Ina Magenta (the grandma). How things have changed! We shared a dressing room, so we kept talking the whole time. *Chikahan* to death!

**Reminiscing…**

*Yah.* Like we were not actors… just like one big family on the set. We ate together, had junk food for *merienda*. I always enjoy myself when I work with Bossing Vic (Sotto). He's quiet, but he's a pro, always on time. He takes care of his co-workers.

**You mean like a father to you?**

To all of us. When I started working with him I was three, turning four. Now, I'm 22. That's almost 20 years.

**What are the plans for your 20th anniversary (this year)?**

I don't know yet. I'm not into extravagant celebrations. I'm just happy and thankful that I lasted this long.

**How about plans for the future?**

I'd like to go back to school and take up either Film or Criminal Justice.

## In perfect harmony both onstage and off

"IT'S HARD WORKING WITH my wife," singer Robert Seña jests.

"Well, it's not easy working with him, either" Isay Alvarez, also a singer, retorts.

This is not the start of a domestic dispute. The Señas are actually exhibiting perfect harmony, believe it or not. Onstage and off, they are in perfect pitch.

He says: "It can be challenging because even when we're about to sleep, we end up rehearsing. In the car or in the dining room, bright ideas crop up. Since we're always together, we never stop working."

She says: "He's too serious. He likes to focus and take things one at a time. I'm the exact opposite. Like most women, I'm used to multi-tasking. I can juggle various tasks at the same time."

Still, they make things work. "Because at the end of the day," they agree, "we have no one else but each other."

### No rivalry

"There's no rivalry," he attests. "We can be openly critical of each other's work. In fact, she can be too honest."

"It's all in the timing," she points out. "I can tell him his strengths and weaknesses, but I can't just blurt it out. I respect his work. I can suggest, but I cannot impose."

"Actually, I ask comments from her," he clarifies.

So how do they settle disagreements? "He knows when to back off, and that's when I'm getting hot-headed," she says.

He confirms that. "I try to make light of the situation and crack a joke."

If they invariably finish each other's sentences, it's because they've been friends since 1982 (while working on the local play "Magsimula Ka") and sweethearts since 1991 (while acting in the West End musical "Miss Saigon").

"We were best buddies first," she says.

"Then, one day I asked her out to dinner," he says.

"My initial reaction was: 'You're crazy!'" she says.

"She told me to make something of myself first," he says, laughing.

"I wanted to challenge him," she explains.

He continues: "Later, I guested in Lea Salonga's homecoming concert at the PICC. I got good feedback from the public and the press. So when I returned to London, I showed her all my newspaper clippings!"

"Now, we do shows together," she says. "We're effective as a husband-and-wife team."

Last year, their show "Love You, Hate You, Love You" had SRO runs at Merk's.

But they also have individual ventures. He worked on the musical "Project Jose"; she did the comedy troupe "The Angfourgettables."

If you ask them, though, their most successful "projects" as a couple are their two kids—Roberto, 13 and Emilio, 6.

The kids are following in their parents' footsteps.

"Emilio is a born performer," Isay says. "Roberto plays the guitar very well."

"We encourage them, but we don't push them," says Robert.

"We also bring them to our shows abroad," she adds. "Those trips make them more open-minded."

He explains: "That way they can see the difference between the Philippines and our Southeast Asian neighbors, for example, and hopefully that will inspire them to do something for our country." Bayani San Diego Jr.

**ROBERT Seña and Isay Alvarez**

## Forget 'pogi' rock: Go for that itchy, fuzzy, worm-y feeling!

AS THEY SAY, FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT. And from all discernible indications, the boys in the band Itchyworms, clad tonight in faux *sikyu* shirts with matching neckties, all possess a wicked sense of humor.

They could very well be their generation's Apo Hiking Society (Ateneo background included) or the next Parokya ni Edgar (for whom they often raise the curtain).

Whatever.

Forget "pogi rock." An official web site describes this band's music as "itchy and happy."

It's best to let these college buddies do the talking.

"It's different kinds of rock combined," drummer Jazz Nicolas describes what they proudly refer to as their *tugtugan*. "If you listen to our latest album ("Noontime Show," Universal Records), it doesn't fall under one single category."

### Diverse influences

"That's because of our diverse influences," says bassist Kelvin Yu, who had a bit role in the indie film "Big Time," the theme song of which, "Salapi," is included in "Noontime Show." "But our common inspiration is The Beatles."

"I also listen to Eddie Peregrina and Ruben Tagalog," says guitarist Chino Singson. "The *kundiman* sound came out in the album."

Currently playing on their iPod are such divergent sounds as AC/DC, Sting, Led Zeppelin, Bon Jovi, Def Leppard, Michael Jackson and Madonna.

"We're 1980s kids," Nicolas admits.

On cue, Singson sings the old Edsa revolution anthem, "Handog ng Pilipino sa Mundo."

The mere mention of the 1980s inspires them to wax nostalgic about retro fashion.

"High-cut rubber shoes," says guitarist Jugs Jugueta.

"In which you tuck your *baston* pants," Yu says, hollering.

"Le Tigre and Lacoste shirts, espadrilles and topsider shoes," says Singson.

"Breakdance showdowns on linoleum floors," Nicolas pipes in, laughing.

Alas, they were grade-schoolers "in khaki short pants" then.

Their teens coincided with the 1990s, at the same time as the rock explosion ignited by Eraserheads, Teeth et al.

"We're glad that the band scene is alive once more," Singson shares. "It's like the 1990s all over again."

"It's just a cycle," Jugueta offers.

The flip side of rock resurgence, however, is the plagiarism controversy hounding some local bands.

Jugueta assumes a diplomatic tone: "People have been making music for so long that similarities are bound to happen… "

"I just hope it's not deliberate," Yu says.

"It's sad because we know that Filipinos are very much capable of coming up with good original songs," Singson asserts.

"We shouldn't pay attention to copycats," Nicolas says. "Instead we should focus on the music makers who don't plagiarize… like us."

On that note, the conversation is steered back to their new album. A favorite cut is "Soap Opera."

"It sounds funny, but the message is serious," says Nicolas. "It's satirical. It sums up our observations about the entertainment industry in the Philippines."

**ITCHYWORMS at PDI's anniversary party: Children of the 1980s.**

ROMY HOMILLADA

# Aga tells good friend Sharon . . .

From page A2-1

shot abroad," Aga said of the upcoming project, "In order for our team-up to work, Sharon and I should look good together. When we look at each other, she should fall in love with me, and I with her."

Which, he implied, might not be plausible between two overweight lead stars.

Aga discovered he had hypercholesterolemia—very high level of cholesterol in his bloodstream—early last year.

"I also found out that being thin doesn't mean you're healthy. That's when I included oatmeal in my diet," said Aga, who is the newest endorser of Quaker Oats. "I'm starting to lose weight, I think because I'm eating right. Also, I go to the gym twice a day—for weights, then for boxing. I have made this my lifestyle. No short cuts. No pills. No surgery."

On the other hand, he said, his wife Charlene, a sweet tooth, is cutting her intake of sugar. "Fortunately, she has no weight problem. Since she grew up in the States, she's used to not eating rice and pork. She loves salads and fish. The twins (Atasha and Andres) are taking oatmeal, too."

**How do you pick the products you will endorse?**

You say yes to endorsing products that you really believe in. You don't want to endorse, for example, a plant fertilizer that you know would harm people and the environment. I choose to promote products that I actually use at home.

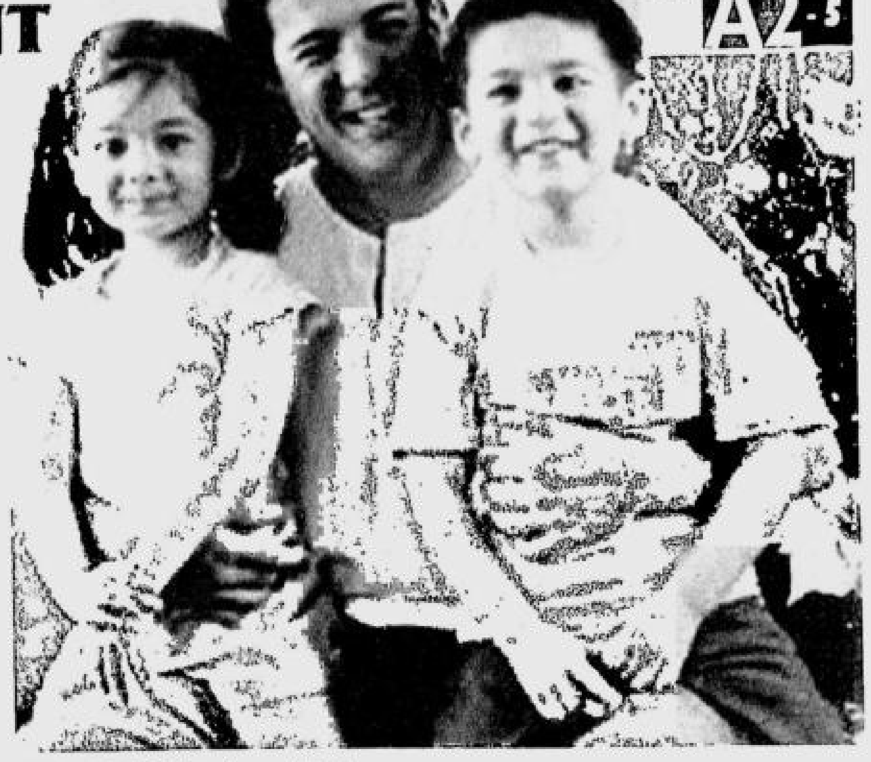
**The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) filed a tax evasion case against Regine Velasquez when she failed to declare her earnings from endorsing Nestlé in 2003. Are you diligent in this department?**

They will never have a case against me. I pay my taxes, *kahit masama ang loob ko*. And why shouldn't I feel bad? It's an open secret that a lot of Filipinos are not truthful when it comes to paying their taxes. This is because they don't trust government officials with their money. They know that the money they give is not put to good use:

These officials can't even provide decent schools for children in the provinces. You don't have to go far. Just look around. People are disappointed with the lack of support from the government. Billions and billions of money are being pocketed by corrupt officials.

**You're successful as a father, husband and actor. What else do you hope to achieve?**

What I really wish for is for this country to achieve its former status as one of the most prosperous in Asia. I hope for people in the government to regain the trust of Filipinos. When that happens, everything will be better for us.



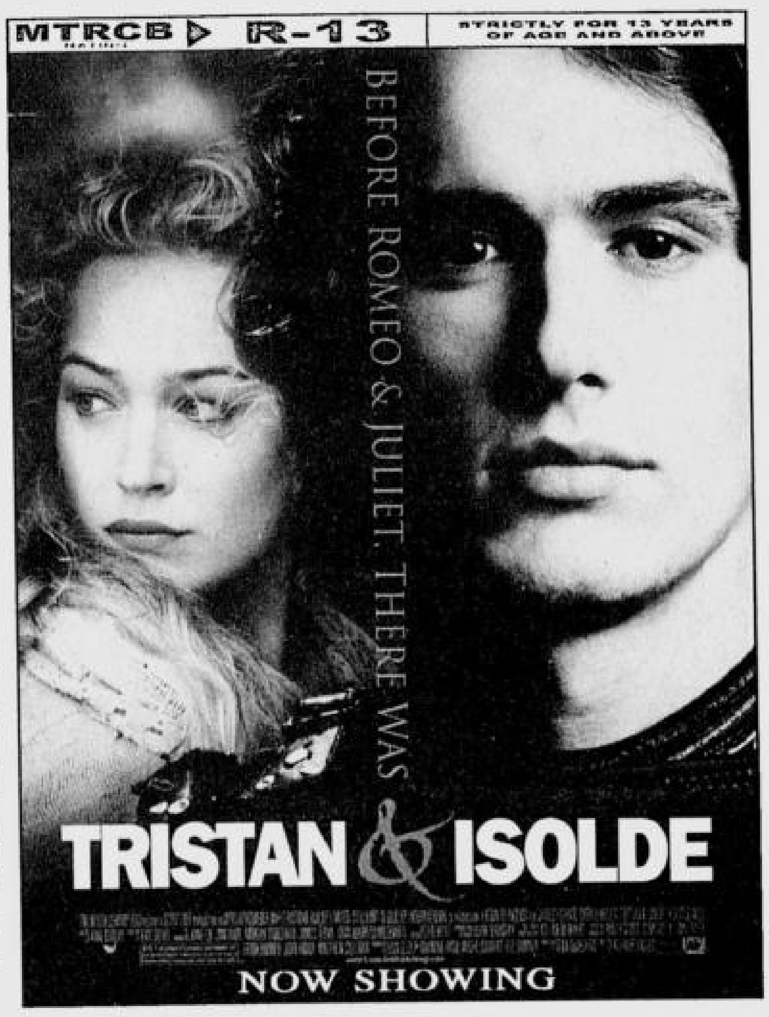
AGA with kids Atasha and Andres

# Fear of the familiar . . .

From page A2-1

under-lit goon in funeral wear? He, and the other supernatural beings here, while sporting convincing and fittingly gruesome makeup, might have appeared more frightening had they veered away from the norm.

"Pamahiin" has polished but adventurous cinematography, although that goes overboard in a particular scene with Noah, Eileen, and the amulet merchant (Kookoo Gonzales) near the climax. The conversation among the three is awkward, as the camera zooms to each of them while they talk and darts out after, with matching loud, screeching sound effects. Imperfections aside, the movie is still easily diverting. The provincial locales and sets add a chilling quality to the visuals, as do the special effects that were used sparingly but wisely (the black butterflies in some scenes, a wall-crawling Contis, etc.). And it doesn't hurt that Jaclyn Jose adds camp and creepiness to the whole macabre puzzle.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| GB3 GREENBELT 3 | 1 THX ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS | 2 THX EIGHT BELOW 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS | | |
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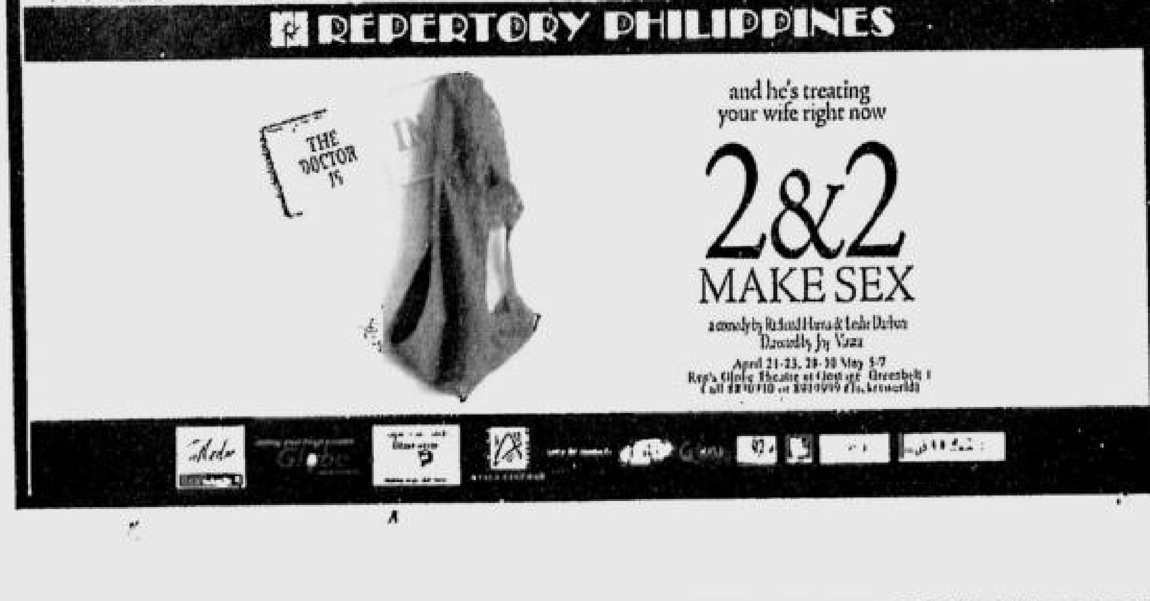
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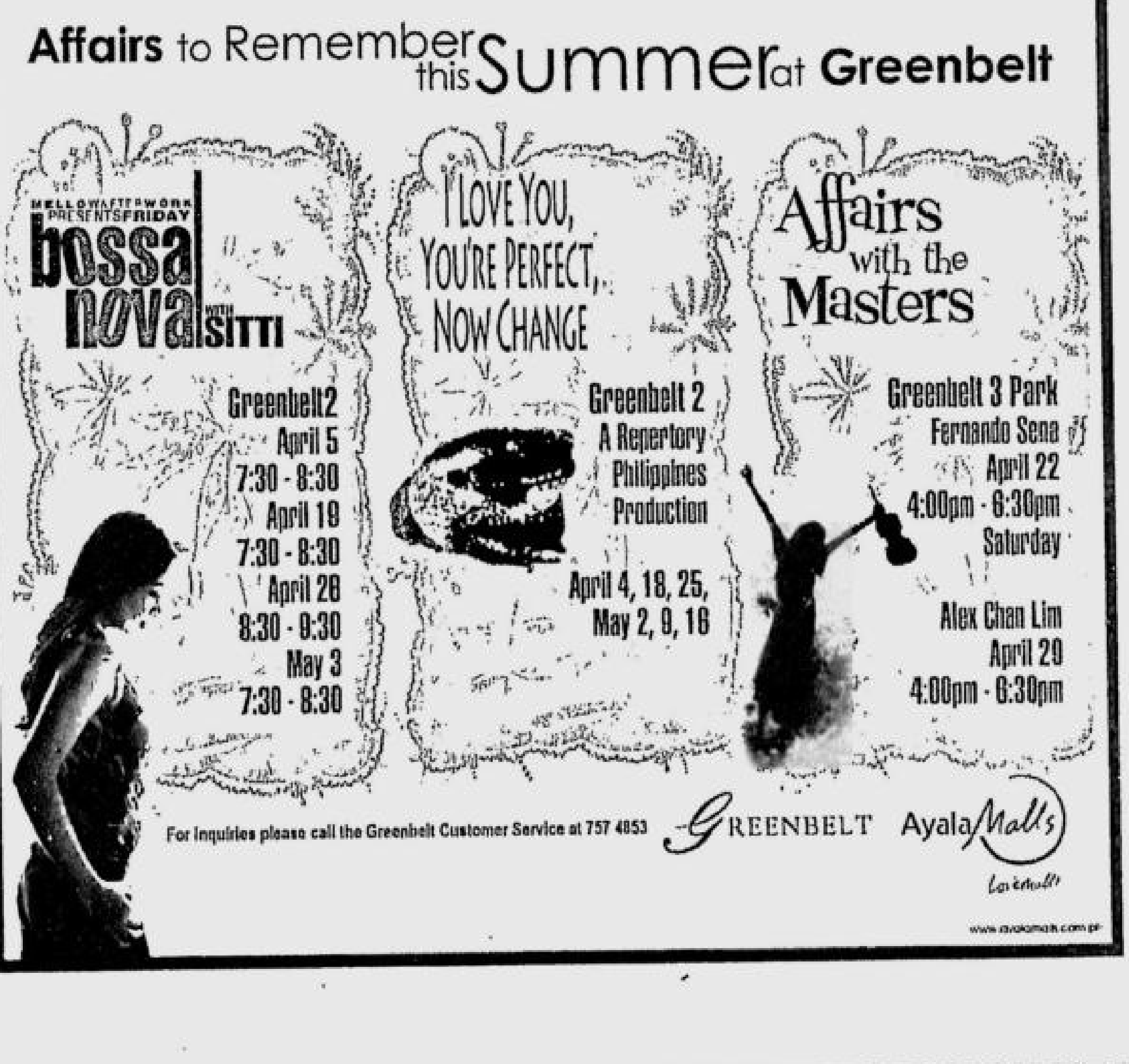
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# Inspiring story of huskies as heroes

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

## Viewers welcome miraculous events

THE FILM, "EIGHT BELOW" IS DELIGHTING and affecting viewers with its unusual story. (inspired by actual events, yet) about sled dogs in Antarctica who survive for more than 170 days on their own, after their research base is closed due to a giant storm.

Before the huskies are left to their own devices, however, the production cannily and sensitively makes sure that viewers have gotten to care a lot for the sled dogs and their human master, Jerry (**Paul Walker**).

Thus, when he's forced to leave, the strong bond they've forged sustains them for months on end, despite their being separated by thousands of miles, until they're finally reunited at film's end.

The "villain" in the movie is an ambitious, self-centered scientist (**Bruce Greenwood**) who discovers a rare meteorite in Antarctica with the help of Jerry and his sled dogs.

They end up saving his life, but he refuses to help Jerry rescue the stranded huskies—until a plot twist knocks some sense into his meteorite-hard noggin, and retroactive gratitude into his heart.

Human emotions apart, director **Frank Marshall** wisely chooses to focus on the heroic dogs for much of the film's running time.

He does succumb to the temptation to resort to anthropomortism once in a while, but in the movie's most effective scenes, the dogs touch viewers' hearts simply by being resolute, patient and noble.

Even as nature does its worst, they survive from day to day, until the days have become weeks, then months, and the approaching winter threatens to end all possible hopes of survival.

Then, just in the nick of time, the researcher has his all-important change of mind and heart, and the film finally hurtles on to its well-deserved happy ending.

"Eight Below" works because viewers want its central dog-human relationship to be affirmed by the movie's "miraculous" events.

When it does, the film ends up inspiring members of the audience to believe that things will turn out well for them as well, especially when the going gets really tough.

It's a bit facile, to be sure, and the movie does sag in the middle, but those noble and resolute huskies make it work.

### '24 hours'

CUESHÉ is back with its fifth single, "24 Hours," from the platinum album, "Half Empty, Half Full." **Fritz Ladrado's** song is about moving on and holding on.

The "24 Hours" music video by **Bobby Bonifacio Jr.** and **Quark Henares** will be launched in a free show at 8 p.m. on April 29 at Eastwood City Plaza, Libis, QC. On the same day, it will premiere on the MYX music video channel.

### Effective Oral Presentation

A WORKSHOP on Effective Oral Presentation will be held starting May 15 at the Ortigas Complex, Pasig City. Topics include overcoming stage fright, understanding your audience, planning and delivering your presentation, effective use of notes, and visual aids. Contact **Manu Ofiaza**, Coverlines, at 821-3583.

### 'Mission: Impossible III' preview

CATCH a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the blockbuster movie, "Mission: Impossible III" on NBO's "The Big Preview" at 8 p.m. on April 30. HBO subscribers could win an all-expense-paid trip for two to attend the film's gala premiere in Tokyo. In addition, 150 pairs of tickets to the film's advance May 2 screening here are up for grabs for those who register for the contest to go to Japan. Log on to http.//www.hboasia.com/mi3.

### New filmmakers

"THE HILLS Have Eyes," scripted by **Wes Craven**, is directed by new filmmaker **Alejandre Aja**. Only 27 years old, Aja spent his formative years assisting his director father, **Alexandre Arcady**. At 10, he met his longtime collaborator, **Gregory Levasseur**, who would become a visionary scriptwriter and art director.

At 18, Aja and Levasseur's "Over the Rainbow," received a Cannes Film Festival nomination for Best Short Film. Three years later, their first feature, "Furia," was nominated for a Fantasport International Fantasy Award for best film. Then, the pair caused a sensation at the Toronto and Sundance film festivals with "High Tension," resulting in a wide US release for the small French film.

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CINEMA 2
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1 EIGHT BELOW
2 BANDIDAS
3 ICE AGE 2
4 RESERVED
5 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
6 SUBMERGED
7 JUST FRIENDS
8 FINAL DESTINATION 3
9 PAMAHIIN
10 D LUCKY ONES
11 MOMENTS OF LOVE
12 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 SUBMERGED
3 PAMAHIIN
4 ICE AGE 2
5 BANDIDAS
6 MOMENTS OF LOVE
7 D LUCKY ONES
8 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 PAMAHIIN
2 ICE AGE 2
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 BANDIDAS
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 EIGHT BELOW
5 D LUCKY ONES
6 PAMAHIIN
7 SUBMERGED
8 MOMENTS OF LOVE
9 ICE AGE 2
10 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
11 VENOM
12 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 ICE AGE 2
2 SUBMERGED
3 EIGHT BELOW
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5 D LUCKY ONES
6 VENOM
7 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
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9 MOMENTS OF LOVE
10 JUST FRIENDS

SM CITY BICUTAN
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3 D LUCKY ONES
4 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
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3 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE
5 D LUCKY ONES
6 PAMAHIIN

SM CITY MANILA
1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 VENOM
3 SUBMERGED
4 ICE AGE 2
5 BANDIDAS
6 EIGHT BELOW
7 PAMAHIIN
8 SHE'S THE MAN
9 MOMENTS OF LOVE
10 FINAL DESTINATION 3
11 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
12 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 ICE AGE 2
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 PAMAHIIN
5 MOMENTS OF LOVE
6 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
7 SUBMERGED
8 VENOM
9 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 PAMAHIIN
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 ICE AGE 2
4 EIGHT BELOW

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3 D LUCKY ONES
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 EIGHT BELOW
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 PAMAHIIN
4 ICE AGE 2

SM CITY BACOOR
1 FINAL DESTINATION 3
2 ICE AGE 2
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7 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
8 JUST FRIENDS

SM CITY STA. ROSA
1 EIGHT BELOW
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4 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY PAMPANGA
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6 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY LUCENA
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3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY MOLINO
1 D LUCKY ONES
2 PAMAHIIN
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 ICE AGE 2

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 ULTRAVIOLET
4 EIGHT BELOW
5 PAMAHIIN
6 ICE AGE 2
7 D LUCKY ONES
8 ULTRAVIOLET

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1 SHE'S THE MAN
2 RESERVED
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 ULTRAVIOLET
5 PAMAHIIN
6 ICE AGE 2
7 RESERVED
8 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY DAVAO
1 EIGHT BELOW
2 CHINESE TALL STORY
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 JUST FRIENDS
5 SHAGGY DOG
6 ULTRAVIOLET

SM CITY CAGAYAN
1 BANDIDAS
2 EIGHT BELOW
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 ICE AGE 2

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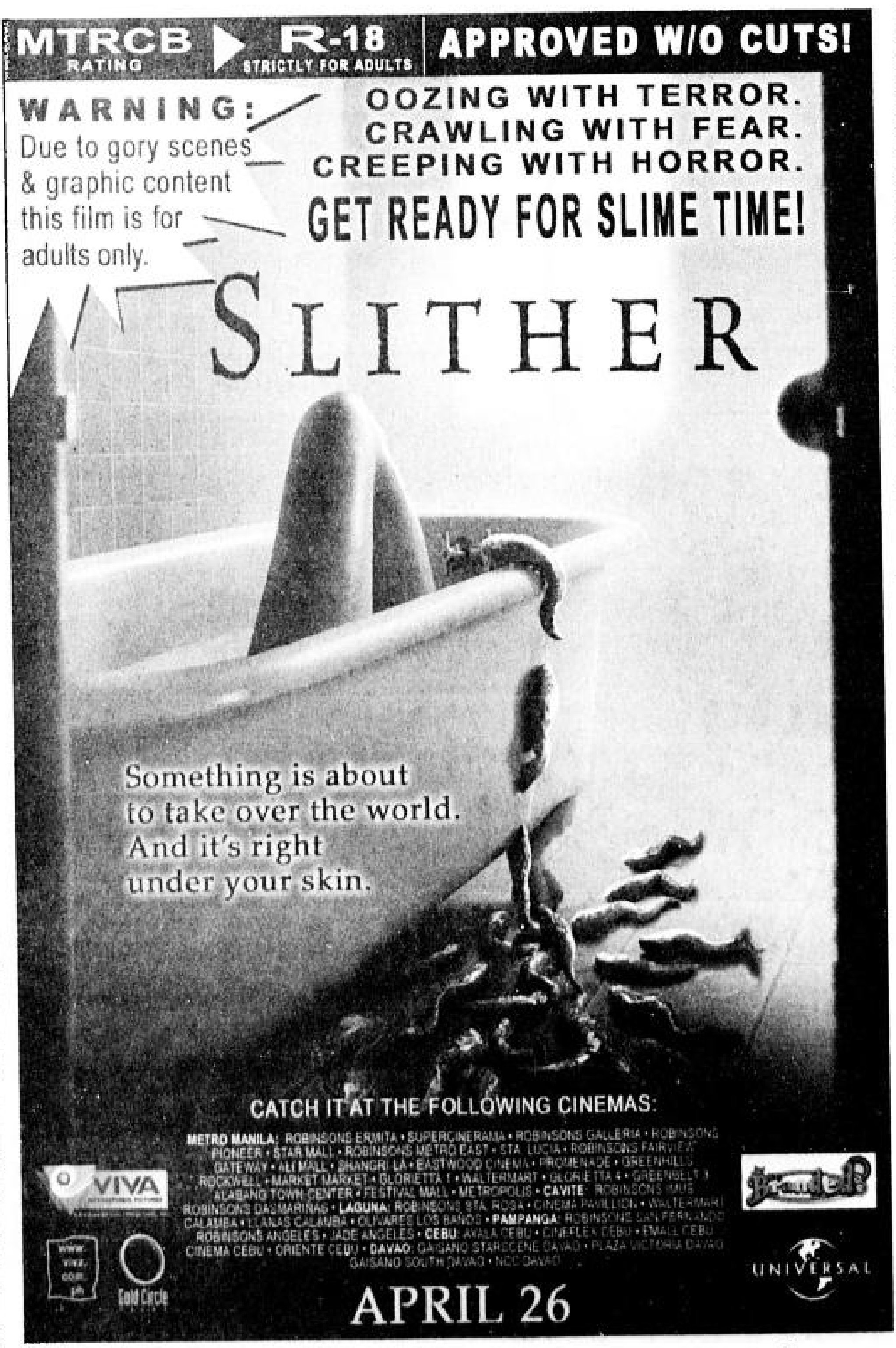

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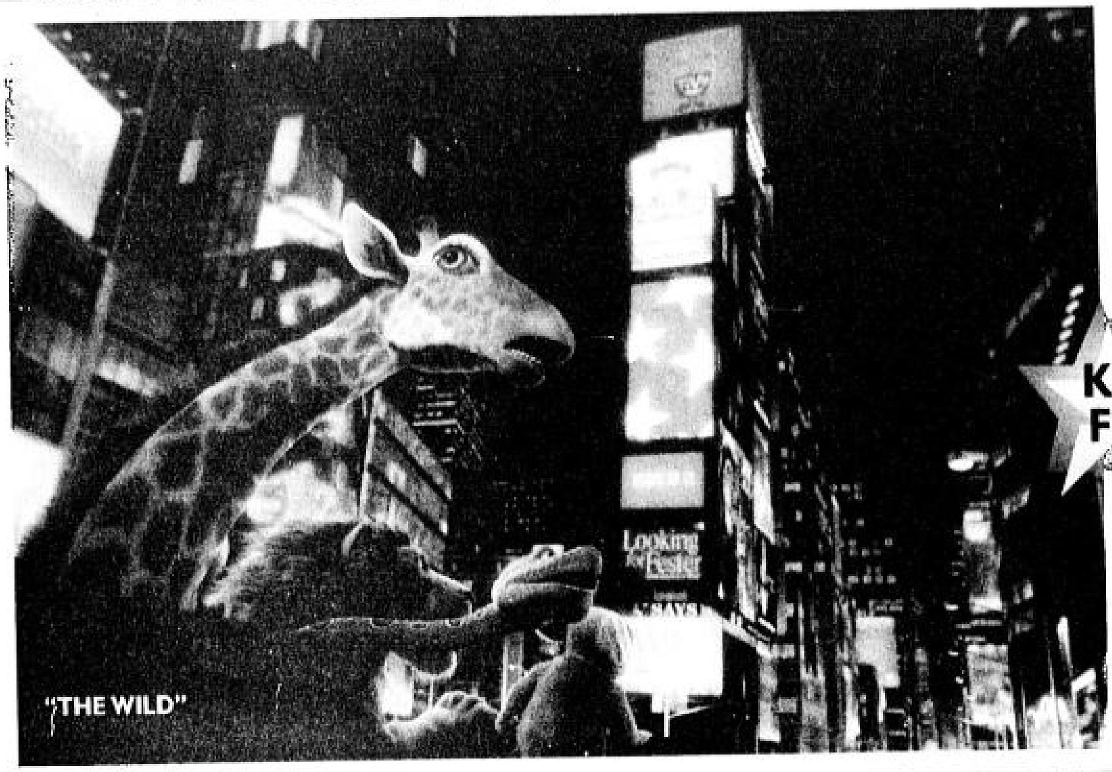
"THE WILD"

## *Lovable & wild*

KID FIT

THE CITY IS A JUNGLE FOR these lovable creatures of Walt Disney Pictures' "The Wild": Samson the lion, Benny the squirrel, Ryan the young lion, Nigel the koala, Bridget the giraffe, Kazar the wildebeest and Larry the anaconda. Opening in Philippine theaters on Wednesday, "The Wild" is about the odd posse—main attractions in the New York Zoo—stepping out of their comfort zones to go on a daring downtown rescue of one of their own.

## FEEDBACK

**FROM Mona Cabrera, Bacolod City, and Geraldine Laxamana, Iloilo City:**

Bianca and Zanjoe really look good together and they are happy together. Zanjoe, fight for Bianca. We support you!

# Lara Croft back to tomb raiding

DALLAS—SCANTILY CLAD ARchaeologist Lara Croft is back for more danger and hidden treasure in "Tomb Raider: Legend."

This game ($49.99 for PlayStation 2 and Xbox, $59.99 for Xbox 360, $39.99 for personal computers) revives a long-suffering franchise.

The decline began with two dismal movies starring Angelina Jolie: "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider" in 2001 and "Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life" in 2003. Also in 2003 came "Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness," with its tedious controls and glitchy graphics.

### Skimpy stays

It seemed as if Croft's glory days from a decade ago were over.

But with "Legend," Eidos Interactive has liberated the brainy super heroine by letting Croft do what she does best: raid tombs for treasure, solving puzzles along the way.

This rebuilt Croft still wears her skimpy outfit consisting of combat boots, shorts and a tank top. Her revealing physique remains, too, though she's more athletic and not as outrageously proportioned as before.

This fitter, happier, more productive Croft translates into a game that's much more enjoyable to play than previous games in the series.

The controls are more crisp and precise than they've ever been: Croft jumps, slides and dangles off cliffs and swinging vines like a circus acrobat (though swimming is still a bit clunky).

As the name implies, "Legend" explores some of Croft's roots, beginning with a plane crash with her mother in the Himalayas when she was just 9. Then there's some odd story involving sword fragments, but really this isn't a game you'll buy for a deep plot.

Croft's known for dual-wielding pistols, and packing heat certainly has its uses in the booby-trapped environments she'll explore in Bolivia, the Himalayas, Japan and other spots around the globe.

One of her niftiest new gadgets is a magnetic grappling tool. You can use it to shoot a cable in the distance to grab enemies, pull open stone doorways and to swing Tarzan-style across otherwise impassable chasms.

"Legend" uses real-world physics and many objects can be used strategically: piles of rocks can be pushed down a hillside to crush foes, for example.

There's little difference between the various versions in terms of gameplay.

If there are any faults to be found, it's the ease with which I breezed through the game.

Two days of casual play and I was done. But it's a good sign that I was left wanting more. *Matt Slagle, AP*

## CHEER FACTOR

### Gnomeo & Juliet

LOS ANGELES—British rocker Sir Elton John and Disney plan a version of Romeo and Juliet portrayed by animated gnomes, The Hollywood Reporter said. John's Rocket Pictures will co-produce, with Disney's Miramax division, "Gnomeo and Juliet," borrowing from William Shakespeare. *AFP*

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | TRISTAN & ISOLDE | 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 | R-13 |
| 2 | ICE AGE 2 | 12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30 | G |
| 3 | EIGHT BELOW | 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00 | GP |
| 4 | JUST FRIENDS | 1:20, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30 | R-13 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ICE AGE 2 | MTRCB. GP | 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 LMF |
| 2 | EIGHT BELOW | MTRCB: GP | 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF |
| 3 | SUBMERGE | MTRCB R-13 | 12.40, 3.00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00 |
| 4 | TRISTAN & ISOLDE | MTRCB: R-13 | 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 |

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| D' LUCKY ONES<br>GP<br>1:10,3:20,5:30,<br>7:30,10:00 | SUBMERGED<br>R13<br>1:35,3:45,5:55,8:05,10:15 | ICE AGE 2<br>G<br>11:30,1:30,3:30,<br>5:30,7:30,9:30 |

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| CINEMA 2 | SUBMERGED | 10:30, 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30 | PG13 |

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| CINEMA 4 | TRISTAN & ISOLDE | 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 | GP |
| CINEMA 5 | EIGHT BELOW | 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 | R13 |

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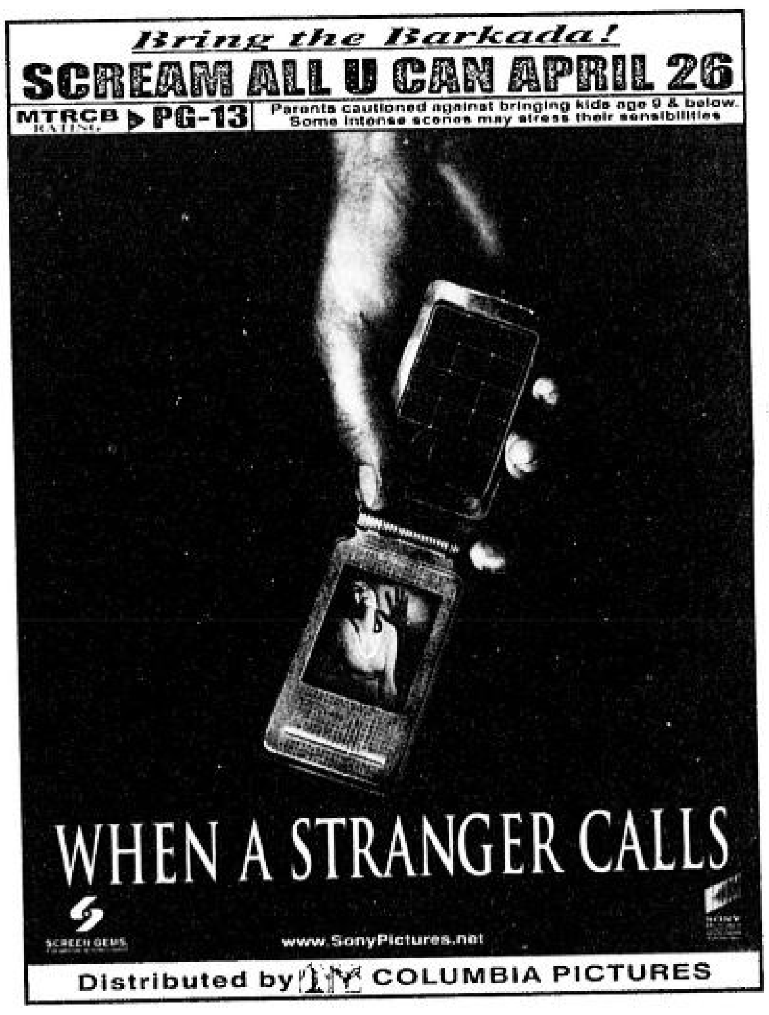
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IN 141 YEARS, THERE'S NEVER BEEN A TRAITOR IN THE [illegible] UNTIL NOW
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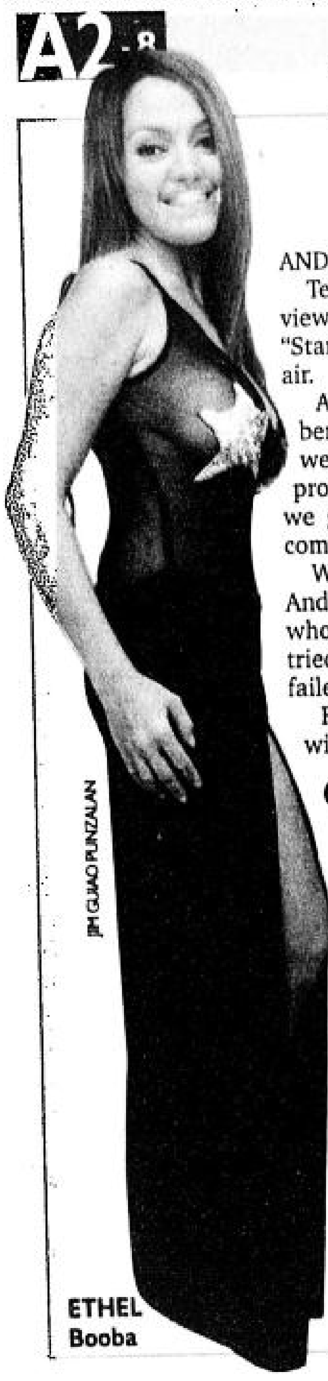
## RUSHES

# Amalia Fuentes' disappearing act



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

ETHEL Booba

AND THEN SHE WAS GONE!

Televiewers are wondering why the interview with veteran actress Amalia Fuentes on "StarTalk" on Saturday abruptly went off the air.

Amalia was admonishing son-in-law Albert Martinez yet again (she's been at it for weeks) over past disagreements—and in the process, chastising her own daughter, Liezl, we guess. Suddenly, she was overtaken by commercials.

When the show resumed, Amalia was gone. And Butch Francisco, one of the show hosts who was interviewing her, just said the show tried to contact Albert for a comment but failed.

Fine with us. We were very uncomfortable with what we saw and heard, anyway.

### Catching up

All that indiscretion with her paramour seems to be catching up with Ethel Booba. GMA 7 is reportedly canceling her magazine show "Jologs Guide" and reality program "Extra Challenge."

### To the rescue

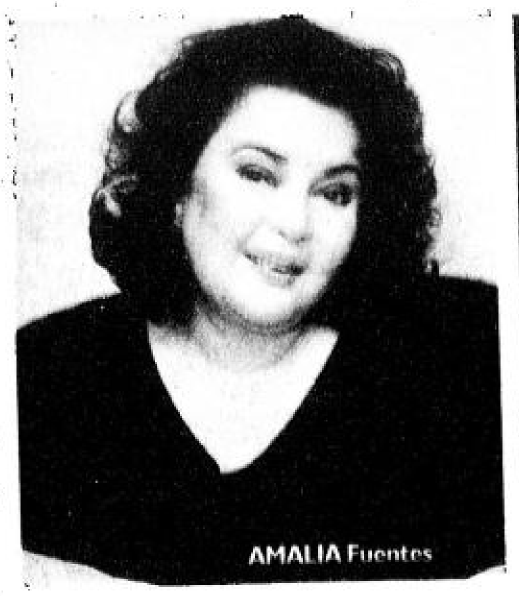
Ethel's "EC" co-host Paolo Bediones is quick to the rescue: "It's unfair to blame Ethel. Her personal life has nothing to do with the changes in the show."

Say what? Why don't we ask the viewers?

### Iya, oh yeah

Iya Villania competes for applause with Toni Gonzaga onstage as featured guests in Aliwan Fiesta '06 at the Aliwan Theater, Star City Complex, Pasay City on Thursday.

Guess who we're betting on?



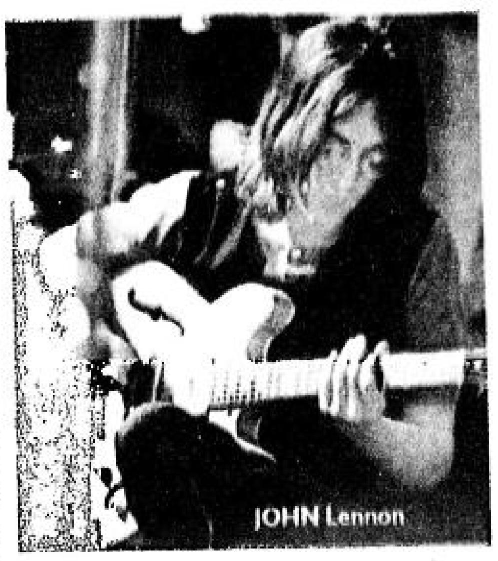
AMALIA Fuentes

### Channeling Lennon

In Los Angeles, Reuters reports, a controversial television seance airing today will claim it has reached the spirit of John Lennon, but viewers will have to pay $9.95 to find out what the peace-loving Beatle has to say.

The special, being carried on pay-TV service In Demand, was organized by the producers of a 2003 attempt to channel the late Princess Diana. That show failed to find Diana and received reviews that could have sunk the Titanic but it is estimated to have grossed close to $8 million.

PAOLO Bediones



JOHN Lennon

IYA Villania

### Wild Bo

That's Bo Derek, not Bice, sorry girls. Agence France Presse reports that the iconic US actress has been appointed as special envoy of the Secretary of State for Wildlife Trafficking Issues.

Derek, best-known for her role in the 1979 feature film "10," appeared at a ceremony at the US State Department and said she was honored to accept such a "daunting" role and to do her part to help save the environment.

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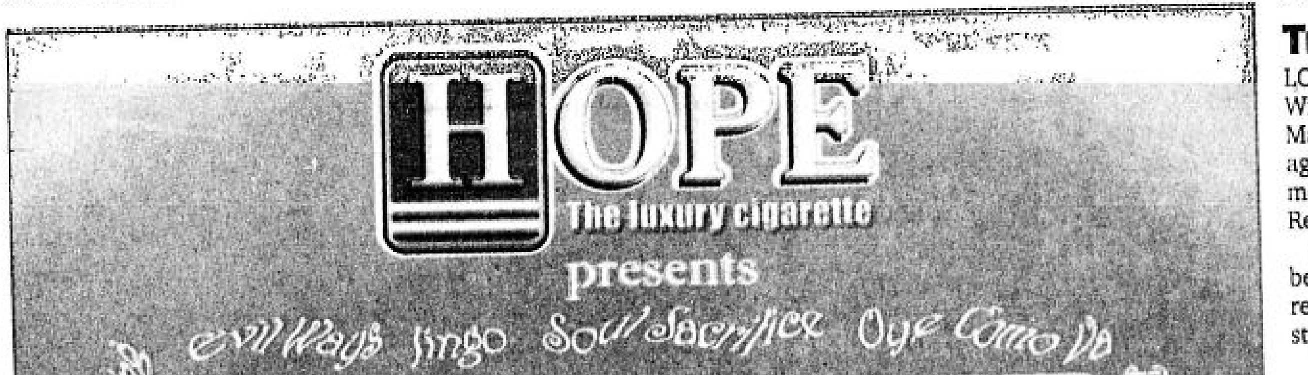
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## ROUNDUP

### Colin, Nicole settle

LOS ANGELES—HOLLYWOOD bad boy Colin Farrell and his ex-girlfriend have reached a settlement in a bitter legal battle over a steamy sex tape they made together, one of the parties in the case told AFP Tuesday.

The battle began last year when Farrell sued to stop distribution of the raunchy tape of him having sex with former Playboy Playmate Nicole Narain, whom he accused of attempting to peddle the tape to video distributors.

COLIN Farrell

"All parties came to an amicable decision that everybody agreed upon, which I can't disclose yet," said Sal Abbate, chief executive of adult video distributor Internet Commerce Group, which was also sued by Farrell.

Celebrity sex tapes have become a hot commodity in Hollywood following the massive commercial success of those featuring Pamela Anderson and her then husband Tommy Lee, another starring celebrity socialite Paris Hilton and a third featuring actor Tom Sizemore. *AFP*

### Travolta, Macy team up

LOS ANGELES—JOHN TRAVOLTA AND William H. Macy team up with Tim Allen and Martin Lawrence in a comedy about middle-aged suburbanites that take to the road on motorcycles, the trade publication Hollywood Reporter said Monday.

The upcoming film, titled "Wild Hogs," will be produced by Tollin/Robbins Prods and directed by Walt Becker for Touchstone Pictures.

The movie "revolves around a group of frustrated middle-age suburban biker wannabes who hit the open road in search of adventure, only to encounter a real Hells Angels group," the Reporter said. *AFP*

WILLIAM Macy

### He wasn't there

NEW ORLEANS—A JUDGE SAYS he tossed out a 22-year-old kidnapping and molestation claim against Michael Jackson because the pop star proved he was miles away from where the abduction allegedly occurred.

THE STARS of "Desperate Housewives"

US District Judge Eldon Fallon dismissed the case last week. The reasons for his decision were posted on the court's website.

Joseph Bartucci Jr. had claimed that he was forced into a white limousine on May 19, 1984, during the New Orleans World's Fair, and driven to California while being molested, held at gunpoint and cut with steel wire and a razor blade. *AP*

### Free 'Housewives'

NEW YORK/ATLANTA—WALT Disney Co.'s ABC television network will offer some of its most popular shows, such as "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost," for free on the Web in a service supported by advertising, the company said.

US media companies have been experimenting with ways to deliver programs through new technologies while maintaining revenue as viewership for prime-time television schedules slowly erodes.

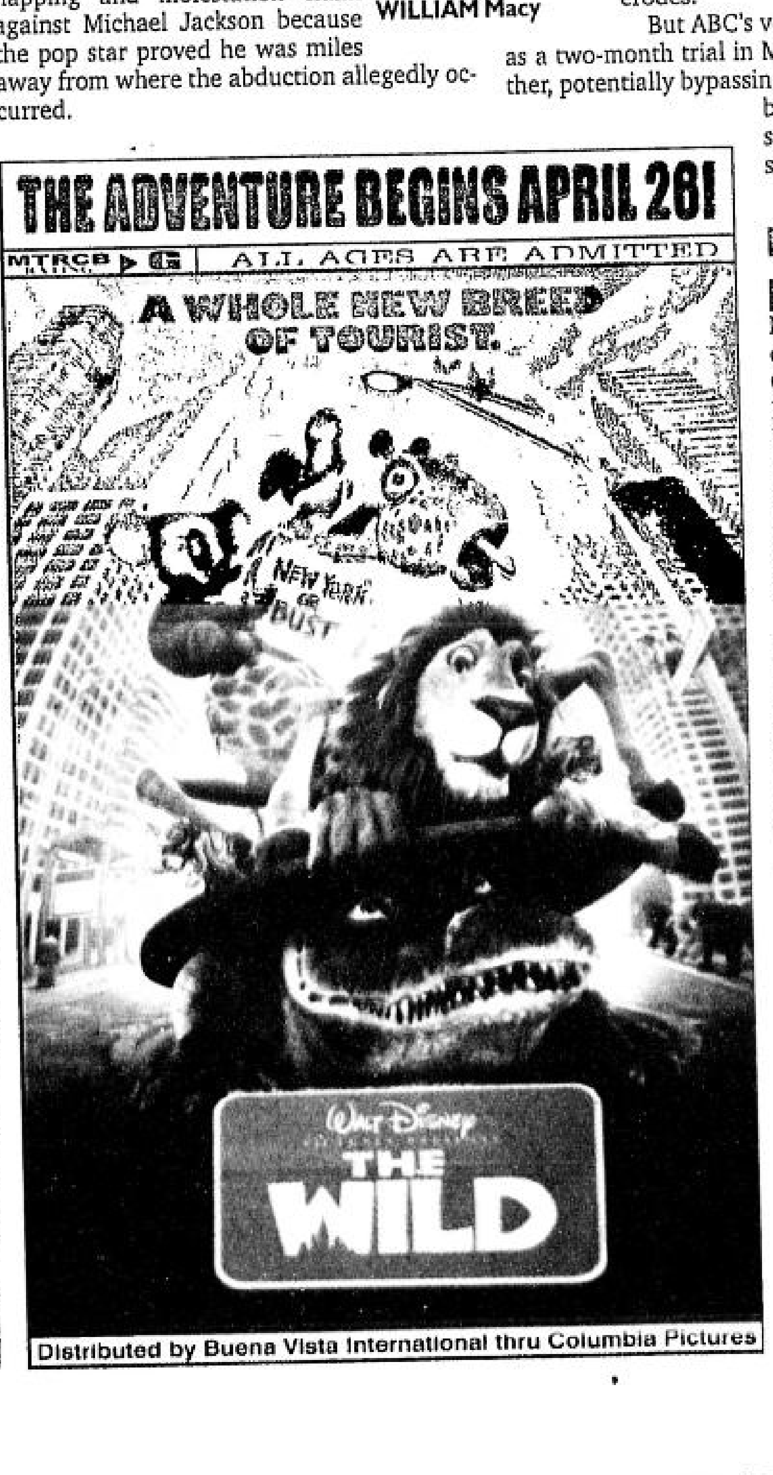
But ABC's venture, which starts as a two-month trial in May, goes a step further, potentially bypassing cable operators by bringing top shows straight to the consumer, analysts said. *Reuters*

### Disclaimer, please!

MADRID—SPAIN'S conservative Roman Catholic group Opus Dei on Tuesday said it had written to Sony-Columbia films asking it to include a disclaimer in its film "The Da Vinci Code," stressing the work is fiction.

The film, to be presented May 19 at the Cannes film Festival, is based on the best-selling novel of the same name by Dan Brown which paints an unflattering portrait of the organization.

A spokesperson for the group told AFP Opus Dei had written to Sony-Columbia on April 6 saying it felt that a "disclaimer at the start of the film clarifying it is a work of fiction and that any resemblance with reality is pure coincidence" would be "a mark of respect towards the Church." *AFP*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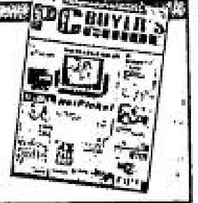
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# Gov't urged to stop NFA subsidy scheme

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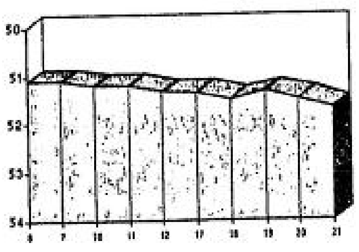

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As of 5 p.m., April 21, 2006

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per ounce Hong Kong, April 20, 2006

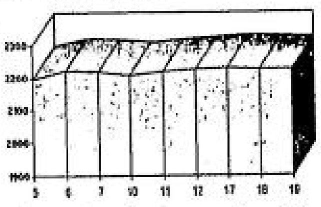
### STOCK MARKET

### Cautious trading seen

INVESTORS ARE EXPECTED TO REmain cautious this week, distracted by surging oil prices.

"Volatility in oil prices has been driven by lower inventory levels in the US and potential supply disrup-

CAUTIOUS/ B2



(See stock market report on Page B6)

## World Bank also wants sale of power plants accelerated

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

THE PHILIPPINES MUST END THE NATIONAL FOOD Authority's costly subsidy program and immediately sell the power-generating assets of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) this year to further improve the government's financial position, a World Bank study urged.

The study also expressed concern about the slow pace of pension fund reforms,, citing the Social Security System's fragile financial condition and the Government Service Insurance System's high operating expenses and limited investment options.

While focusing on the immediate impact of revenues on the national government deficit was crucial, the study said the government must also continue to attend to the performance of government-owned and -controlled corporations.

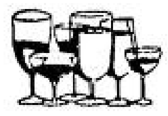
"The deficit of the NFA must also be diligently watched. In particular, government policy of 'buying high and selling low' as a means of keeping staple prices low should be reconsidered," the study said.

"On a medium-term, such a policy is not sustainable and that the government must enhance agricultural reforms to provide sustenance for its large growing population," it noted.

Improvements in the consolidated public sector deficit (CPSD), which fell to 2 percent of gross domestic product in end-2005 from 4.8 percent a year ago, were primarily due to the performance of National Power Corp. following three successive rate increases, improved operating efficiency and the peso appreciation.

GOV'T/ B4

## WHAT'S INSIDE



**Manila de-mined, Lepanto discombobulated** /B3

**Gov't expects interest savings on foreign loans** /B7

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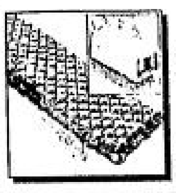

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# Digitel to spend $200M for expansion this year

By Daxim L. Lucas

LISTED TELECOMMUNICATIONS FIRM DIGItal Telecommunications Philippines Inc. will spend $200 million this year to expand the capacity and coverage of its cellular phone operations.

The money will be used mainly to put up additional cell sites for its Sun Cellular brand which, to date, has the smallest network coverage among the country's major wireless networks.

"The company is targeting completion of 2,000 cell sites by the end of year 2006 to support the projected surge of subscribers," Digitel said in documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission ahead of its annual meeting next month. "This expansion will enable the company to serve as many as 6 million subscribers."

The company is owned by taipan John Gokongwei Jr., who also owns interests in food manufacturing, real estate, and airline ventures, among others.

Sun Cellular is the newest entrant in the increasingly saturated local wireless market, and trails telecommunications giants Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc.

The company is hoping to boost its subscriber base by widening its limited network coverage—a frequent deterrent for prospective clients.

In its filing, Digitel told regulators that it was working to address concerns on limited coverage.

"The company is gradually building up its customer base alongside the expansion of its network to be able to provide clients with better quality service," it said.

Digitel has so far hired several "technical partners" to help its expansion plan move forward. These firms include Hewlett Packard and Logica-CMG Wordwide, ShlumbergerSema.

"Leading telecom network suppliers Alcatel (Luzon sites), Ericsson (Visayas and Mindanao sites) and Huawei (National Capital Region sites) are responsible for the full-turnkey network infrastructure build-out and capacity expansion of existing Sun Cellular sites nationwide," the company said.

In its filings with the SEC, the company also outlined its thrust to tap the call center industry as one of its major sources of revenue for this year.

"The growth of the Philippine economy is driven by the substantial jobs created by the call centers, business process outsourcing and shared services," it said. "These are anchored on the ever competitive Philippine telecommunications industry."

To capture a significant market share in this fierce competition, Digitel has engaged itself in the so-called man-on-the-go ("Mango") wireless data, broadband, and revitalized landline services.

The company is also pushing its wireless Internet access services, especially for areas with limited or no access to cable facilities, mimicking a move pioneered by industry giant PLDT.

## Cautious trading seen

From page B1

tions from tensions over Iran, the world's fourth largest oil exporter," AB Capital Securities said in a report.

AB Capital Securities said that with the Philippines importing more than 90 percent of its oil requirements, economic growth might be " imperiled toward the second half."

The government has warned the public about higher crude and refined petroleum prices as oil companies have announced plans of successive increases of as much as 50 centavos a liter on fuel prices in the next several weeks.

"With the inevitable rise in prices, we won't be surprised with any upward adjustment in inflation targets by mid-year. This may eventually force the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to adopt a more restrictive interest rate policy in second half of the year," AB Capital Securities said.

Last week, the benchmark PSEi index gained 1.7 percent or 39 points to close near seven-year highs at 2,263, its highest since Aug. 24, 1999.

Blue chips Ayala Corp. and PLDT led the index's rise last week.

Climbing metal prices boosted the market. Also adding to the upbeat sentiment was better-than-expected first-quarter budget deficit numbers, overcoming fears of higher business costs and adverse consumer spending from rising crude prices, AB Capital Securities wrote. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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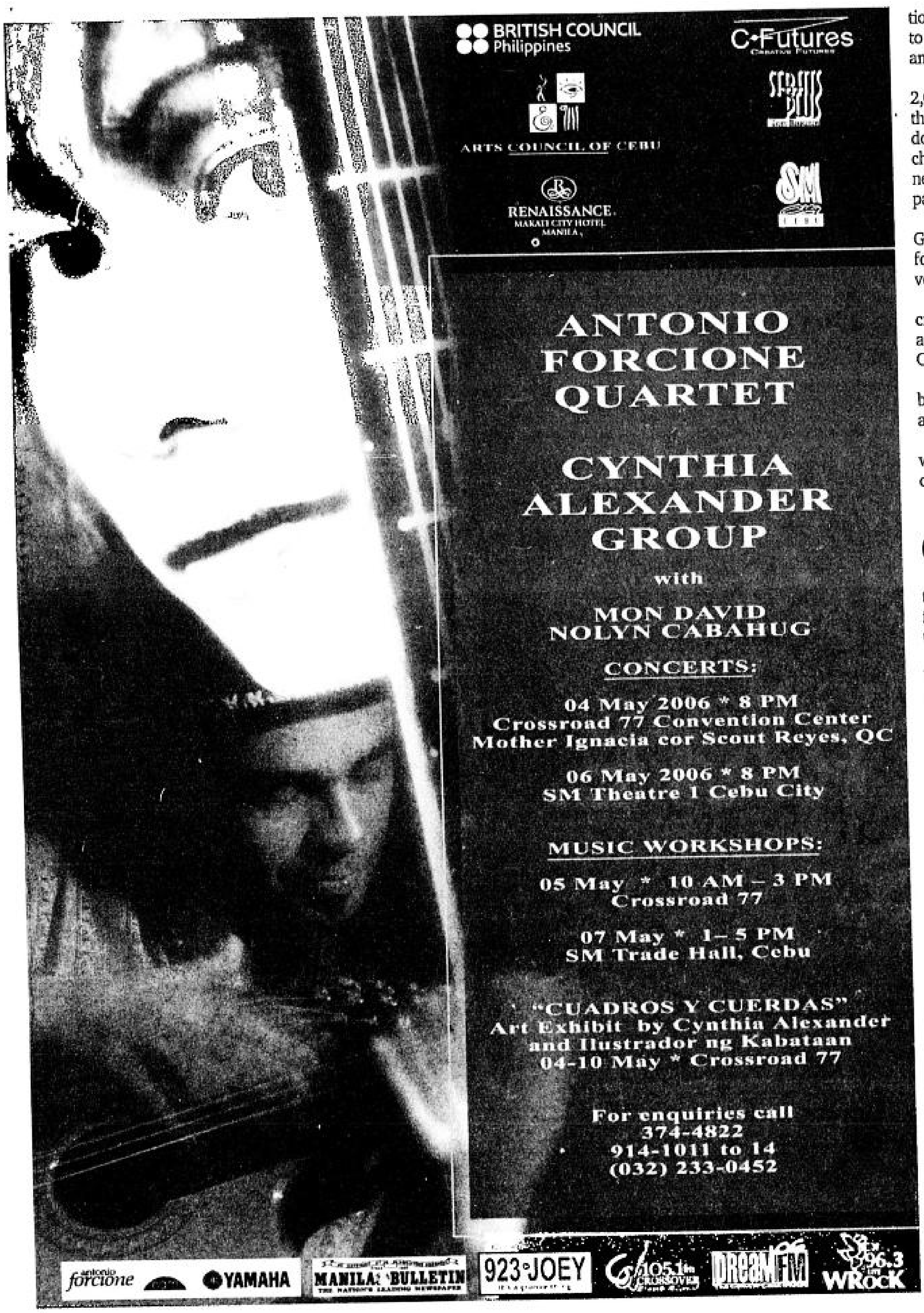

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# Manila de-mined, Lepanto discombobulated

**COCKTALES**

*Victor C. Agustin*

REBOUNDING MINING TYCOON FELIPE Yap has serious governance issues, if we go by the grumblings of his Metrobank partners in Lepanto Consolidated.

Having said that, we feel partly responsible for the outburst of Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes accusing Yap of market-inducing leaks for insider-trading plays on Manila Mining, the other mining company that Yap controls.

Cocktales was trying to pry some information from Yap after the shareholders' meeting of Lepanto Monday when, feeling uneasy that reporters much younger than us were hovering in the background, we then led the mining chair/CEO to the press pack for their turn at the nibblings.

Amid the usual badgering and bantering from the business reporters, Yap, with equal good humor, then quite forthrightly disclosed that Manila Mining's papers had been forwarded to Reyes for approval since late last year, with the ministerial approval expected shortly.

"Negotiations with prospective partners should advance as soon as the renewal of the exploration permit for Kalayaan is released by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources," was how Manila Mining's definitive information statement, released prior to the shareholders' meeting, put it.

Given the cheery assessment and the record-high precious metal prices, believers by the droves bought Manila Mining the following day, only to get slaughtered in the heavy selldown.

(Disclosure: Buoyed by the improving prospects of Lepanto, Cocktales was likewise bitten by the bug and joined the buy-bandwagon the day after, only to get caught in the slaughter.)

The Securities and Exchange Commission, whose chair has still to recover from jet lag, has yet to acknowledge if the market regulator would rise up to the Reyes challenge.

But even prior to last week's questioned transactions, the quarterly shareholders' lists of both Manila Mining and Lepanto since last year attest to no change in the shareholders' stakes of Yap and his F. Yap Securities in both listed companies.

Even the numbered accounts held by F. Yap Securities showed remarkable absence of movements, at least at every end of the quarterly reporting periods.

This is not to say that Yap is already in the clear.

According to a number of brokers, his brokerage firm was indeed heavily buying and selling both issues last week.

With the SEC now possibly on the trail, it is time for Yap to ask himself, given the hot commodities market, whether he wants to be a miner or stay on as a broker.

If he chooses to be the former, Yap should seriously start mining the earth, and stop altogether mining the stock market.

### Thunderous opposition

BCDA Chair Filadelfo Rojas Jr. says it is up to Pagcor, not BCDA and certainly not him as al-

COCKTALES/ B4

# Firms investing ₱1.4B in Subic

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTORS are putting in about P1.4 billion or $28.2 million in various projects at the Subic freeport, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA Chief Executive Armand C. Arreza said the agency would sign contracts with the locators on Wednesday for 12 projects that are expected to create about 1,700 new jobs.

The projects include those engaged in manpower recruitment; trading and shipping of minerals, plastic products, garments and construction supplies; manufacturing; hotel and restaurant operations, and research and development.

The companies involved include Asianpro Cooperative, Century Peak Corp., Coin Chemical Subic Inc., Gigatek Subic Bay Inc., Interisland Resorts and Services Inc., Inyoung-Philippines Inc., Mango Valley Corp., Shengkai Corp., Subic Amino Hightech Corp., Subic Executive Lofts Condominium Corp., Winstar Subic Display Corp. and Yienson Manufacturing Corp.

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FIRMS/ B4

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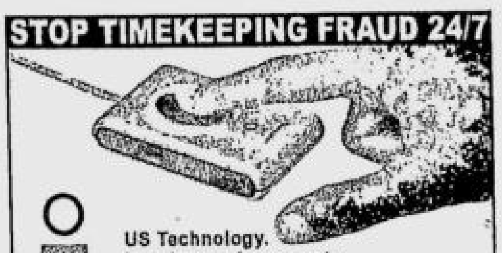

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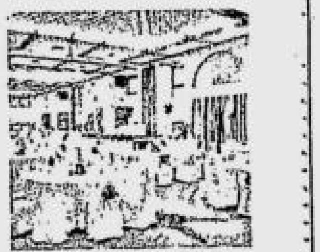

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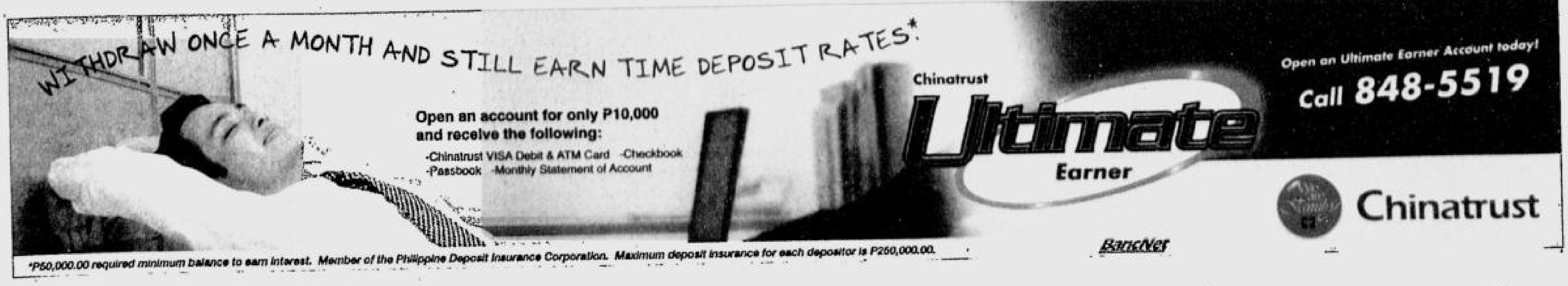

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# Pilipinas Shell expects '06 profit to reach ₱5.7B

## Firm faces contracting market, but remains confident it will match last year's numbers

**By Abigail L. Ho**

PILIPINAS SHELL PETROLEUM Corp. is looking to end the year with the same income it recorded last year, despite weakening demand for petroleum products brought about by rising prices.

Shell last year recorded an after-tax profit of P5.7 billion, 102 percent better than its P2.84-billion performance the year before, despite slower gross sales.

The country's second largest oil firm may have its work cut out for it, however, as Shell country chair Edgar Chua admitted that industry demand has been contracting.

"Last year, the industry contracted 10 percent. The first quarter also looks like that," Chua said. "In 2004, we still posted a slight growth, about 4.5 percent. This year, in the first quarter, however, demand has shrunk."

Demand, he said, should pick up as the country's economy grows.

High prices, however, could push people to further reduce their fuel consumption, effectively bringing down overall demand.

The Department of Energy is urging consumers to further reduce their oil consumption, in light of escalating world oil prices.

"While the economy has so far been resilient against oil price hikes due to the strong counterforce provided by OFW remittances and the relative strengthening of the peso, we cannot be complacent about the need to further reduce our dependence on imported oil," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla had earlier said.

He said the country's lower overall oil demand last year proved that consumers could cut back on oil consumption when necessary.

Last year, consumption of petroleum products dropped 7.9 percent to 109 million barrels a day from 118.4 million barrels a day in 2004.

Lotilla attributed the demand reduction to the government's aggressive promotion of alternative fuels such as coco-biodiesel and ethanol, as well as the mandatory use of coco-biodiesel for government vehicles.

The government's energy conservation measures likewise brought down overall consumption, he said.

Despite a possible further demand contraction, Chua said Shell would still be expanding its operations this year, with plans to add between 10 and 15 service stations this year.

Each of these stations, he said, would cost an average of P50 million.

# Seeing fuschia on the peso

**No Free Lunch**

*Cielito F. Habito*

"PESO FALLS TO 2-MONTH LOW of P51.71 to $1," screamed an INQUIRER headline last Saturday.

As many now recognize, this is either good news or bad news depending on the reader.

If you're an exporter or worker in an exporting firm including a tourism facility, or an OFW or his/her family member, or simply have some dollars stashed away, you would probably be cheering.

But if you are an importer, have a foreign loan to pay, or were planning on a vacation abroad, you'd be unhappy.

If you are an economist taking a longer perspective and looking at the overall welfare of the Philippine economy, you'd be more cautious and would probably reserve judgment until a longer term trend becomes apparent.

### Fuschia book

A new book just out makes interesting reading to one who'd like to take this longer term perspective on the exchange rate.

The thesis of the book is compelling: Our economy has performed the way it has (i.e. miserably) over the past decades primarily because of mismanagement of our foreign exchange rate all through these years. What makes "The Peso Exchange Rate: Why Are We So Poor?" unique is that it was written not by an academic economist but by a practicing one.

Rey Angeles, who studied economics in Ateneo and management at the Asian Institute of Management, writes on this burning issue not just on the basis of what textbooks and journals say, but more importantly, from what he has learned directly as a successful entrepreneur who has felt and weathered the direct impacts of the peso movement over the years.

I can't tell whether his well-researched book will be read in spite of his not being among the familiar names in economics circles, or will in fact be read because of it.

I'd say the book's credibility and authoritativeness precisely draws from the fact that it was written by one with both the academic training and the hands-on experience to thoroughly understand what he is writing about.

In any case, the book's color (Angeles calls it his "Fuschia Book") is as provocative as the thesis it expounds, and will at the very least draw attention on the bookstore shelves.

### Tool, not thermometer

Angeles debunks the notion that the foreign exchange rate should be seen as a mere thermometer that reflects the state of the economy. It should instead be seen as a tool for national economic development.

He asserts that the Philippine economy's structure has been severely deformed by the mismanagement of the Peso's exchange rate since the end of the second World War.

Our past economic managers, and perhaps the Filipino public in general then ("our parents"), made the choices they did then for understandable reasons, choices which essentially boiled down to making the peso more valuable than other currencies in the neighborhood.

Our neighbors' currencies started out much weaker than ours in the postwar period (e.g. the Korean Won at 2.50 to a dollar, Thai Baht at 22 a dollar) and purposely kept weak, which ultimately became the very reason why they are much stronger now.

### Economic evolution

In other words, the evolution of our respective economies was determined rather crucially by how our authorities managed our respective exchange rates from very early on.

As a grade schooler in the early 1960s, I distinctly remember how the P2=$1 exchange rate was printed on the back of school notebooks along with the metric conversion tables and the multiplication table. That's how fixed it was. The 1946 US Bell Trade Act fixed it there upon the end of US rule.

Our trade deficit successively widened in the ensuing years, but rather than devalue the peso, the government chose to impose exchange and import controls that set the future course of the Philippine economy to be marked through the decades ahead by subsidies, incentives and trade protection to hand-picked industries and companies.

It also provided the fertile ground for the dollar black market, smuggling, bribery, and general rent-seeking that has become deeply ingrained in Philippine business culture ever since.

It was not until the '60s when the P2 exchange rate was finally abandoned by President Diosdado Macapagal, and the peso devalued by close to 100 percent, to P3.90. But the culture of selective controls and protection had been ingrained, and more overvaluation was to come.

### Equalizer

The Philippines could have chosen a different course in the '50s, Angeles asserts, and brought us to a very different situation now. Devaluation then could have provided graft-free and across-the-board protection for domestic import-substituting industries without the need for import controls.

It would have also made smuggling costly and uncompetitive against local products, preventing it from taking such a foothold in the local market.

In short, devaluation could have been the great equalizer, providing a level playing field for all industries to find their proper place in the economy based on viability and performance, with minimal government intervention and without the cost of subsidies and incentives.

The book makes a compelling case against having too strong a currency, and does so in language that is more like red than fuschia (i.e. a lot easier to spell, if you remember that old Erap "favorite color" joke.).

Go get yourself a copy and see why last Saturday's news on the peso wasn't such bad news—and was probably good news, in fact. *Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*

# Electricity market seen opening in June

THE PHILIPPINE WHOLESALE electricity spot market, which analysts see as key to the successful sale of state-owned power plants, is likely to open in June, the operator of the trading system said on Friday.

Investors are skeptical whether Manila's plans to attract investment through a freed-up power market will work, and to date, private investment has been mostly in Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs)—where the companies have guaranteed returns.

Lasse Holopainen, president of the Philippine Electricity Market Corp., said he hoped regulators would finish hearings on the pricing mechanisms for the automated wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) on May 11.

The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) must approve the fee that will be charged by WESM and the administered price in rare cases when the market failed to operate due to natural causes such as typhoons, he said.

Analysts and officials have said the biggest stumbling block to the sale of dozens of power plants of state-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor) was the delay in the opening of the WESM.

They say investor interest has been dampened by a lack of supply contracts with distributors, regulatory uncertainty, an interfering judiciary and a strong environmental lobby.

The Philippines failed to sell any power plants last year due to political instability and investor doubts about profitability in the local energy sector.

Manila had aimed to sell 70 percent of the rated capacity of some 31 national power plants by the end of 2005.

The plants, with rated capacity of 4,335 megawatts, account for about a third of total Philippine generating capacity.

Manila sold six power plants in 2004, or just 11 percent of the targeted generating capacity for sale.

It plans to sell 10 plants this year, with the first auction of a 600-MW plant on April 27, in what is seen as a test of investor confidence in the economy.

Napocor aims to raise $4-5 billion from the sale of its plants and by leasing its electricity grid to cut its debts, which are equivalent to about a third of the country's gross domestic product.

Holopainen said the WESM, which will allow buyers and sellers to trade electricity round the clock by matching computer-based bids and offers, had been due to open in January.

But his firm decided to refile its proposed pricing formula with the ERC after the Supreme Court last year upheld a ruling by the Court of Appeals stopping Meralco or Manila Electric Co. from raising its rates.

The Court of Appeals said energy regulators had acted without proper consultation in granting a rate hike to Meralco, the country's largest power distributor.

Holopainen said the opening of the WESM would lead the way to the successful restructuring of the energy sector and the privatization of Napocor.

"These are not baby steps. This is a giant leap," Holopainen said. "All of a sudden, you are going into full competition and complete transparency. That's exactly what we need." *Reuters*

## The Legend Palawan targets MICE market with new convention center

In the Philippines, when the need comes to get out of the city for business meetings and conventions, there are certain places that come to mind. But now, the clamor is for newer, more interesting local destinations that are conveniently accessible to airports and with unique attractions.

Enter Puerto Princesa, capital city of the country's last nature frontier, Palawan. Today, the city is a bustling center and home of the Legend Palawan Convention Center.

The Legend Palawan announced the completion of their new facility to meet the needs of the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) market needs here. MICE tourism is a new focus of the city since it has not had the international-standard facilities to serve this market until the development of The Legend Palawan Convention Center.

Dubbed as the Philippines' first thematic convention center, The Legend Palawan Convention Center is divisible into three major halls and carries the hotel complex's Filipino design. It can accommodate 650 people in a banquet-style setting and as much as 1,100 people in a theater type arrangement. The structure is surrounded by refreshing greenery and has a small lagoon traversed by a bridge. Native materials accent the Convention Center's overall design.

The Legend Palawan is an inner city resort hotel within proximity of the Puerto Princesa commercial center, business district and several tourist destinations. It is a property of the Legend Hotels International (LHI) Corporation, a 100% Filipino-owned and managed hotel group that also includes The Legend Villas in Mandaluyong City, The Mabuhay Manor in Pasay City and the Kabayan Hotels in Pasay and Cubao.

"There are a lot of inherent qualities in Puerto Princesa that made LHI decide on constructing a convention center here. The city has a rich heritage and offers diverse activities and experiences for visitors. It makes a fantastic business and leisure destination. There's a strong government focus on tourism development and we are here to support that," said Mr. Patrick C. Favoreal, Vice President of Legend Hotels International Corporation.

Palawan primarily serves the leisure market with its beach hotels. For Puerto Princesa, about 40% of visitors are domestic leisure travelers while 30% are made of European and Asian tourists as well as Filipino-Americans. Another 30% are travelers who come to Puerto Princesa specifically for business.

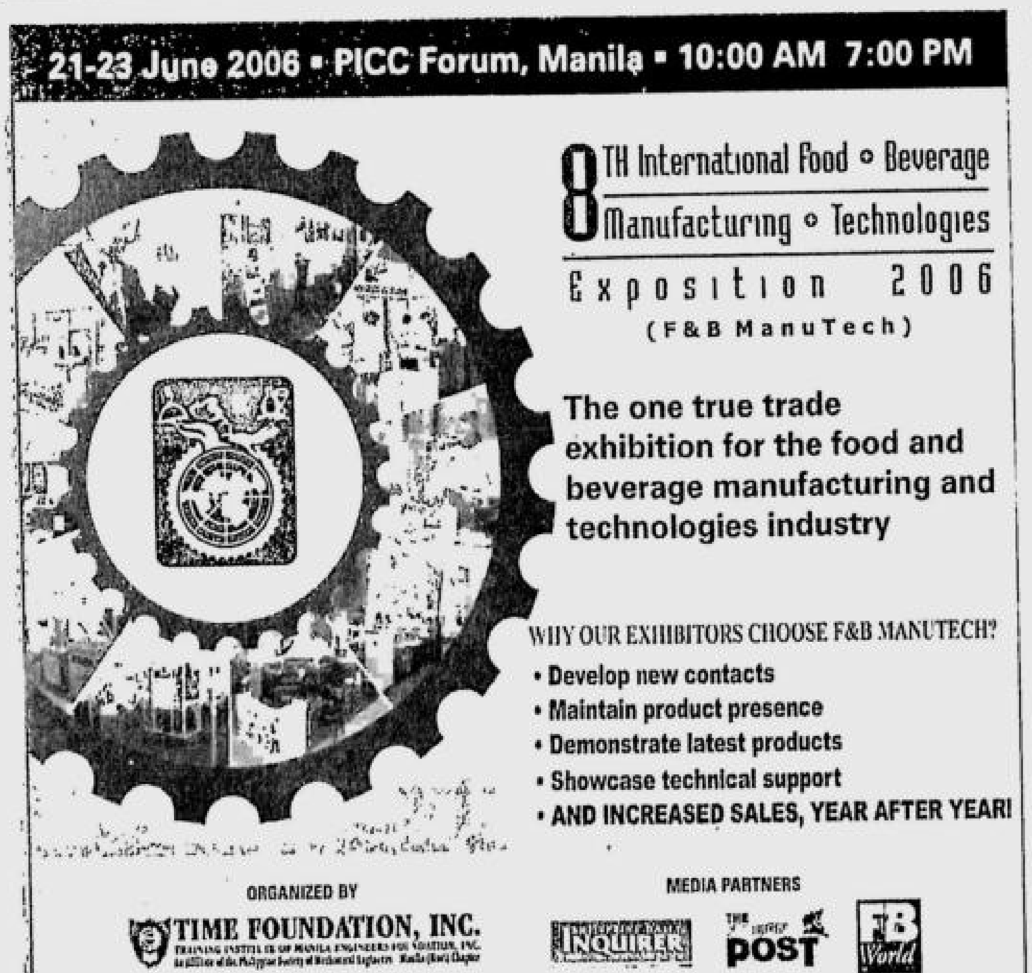
The Legend Palawan is the premier accommodation in the area and provides good value for money, making it the top choice of accommodation in the city. Aside from standard rooms, the hotel offers the LHI innovation of specially designed multi-occupant rooms. The Legend Palawan has the Family Suite, which provides three double deck beds and amenities like a mini-kitchen in one spacious accommodation. The Legend Palawan brand of service and facilities are at par with what one will find in Manila and other Asian capitals.

It offers inhouse tour services called PaX: The Legend Palawan Experience with itineraries as varied as an underground river adventure, an island hopping cruise and a city tour with shopping and culinary stops.

"We give more options and allow guests to choose more varied activities, see more places, visit different islands. There are special interest areas and evening activities so they can spend each day differently. Our hotel gives more flexibility to one's schedule and budget," said Mr. Favoreal.

"Legend Hotels has been very aggressive in pursuing its partnership with both the government and private sectors and will be present in major travel trade events. With our entry into the MICE market through the convention center, you can expect us to further break new ground in tourism over the next few years," he said.

For inquiries, please contact the Manila Central Sales and Reservations telephone + 632 7022700 to 04, Fax + 632 6369256 to 58 or visit www.legendhotels.com.ph..



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# Firms investing ₱1.4B

From page B3

terms of capital layout would be Yienson's $12-million (about P600 million) venture into the manufacturing, importation and export of semi-finished and finished garments.

Second biggest would be Inyoung's $10-million (about P500 million) project to manufacture, fabricate, construct and trade steel structures for another locator's facility that would rise at the Redondo peninsula within the freeport zone.

Also, Arreza said SBMA hoped that more airlines operators would consider doing business in the freeport after the Airport Operators Council last week held its yearly meeting at the Subic International Airport's facilities.

Affiliated with the Montreal-based International Air Transport Association, the AOC groups 48 international airline operators doing business in the country.

In March, Arreza announced that SBMA was offering discount rates on aeronautical fees of between 60 percent and 80 percent in an effort to attract more airline operators.

The fees cover the landing and take off, parking, lighting and other charges like those for the use of navigational equipment and radar.

Arreza had said SBMA was looking into the possibility of SBIA being able to service routes to "any point in Asia."

Current carriers using SBIA include Inter-Island Airlines, which offers chartered flights to Manila and Taiwan; Mandarin Air with flights to and from Taiwan; Cebu Pacific with flights from Incheon in South Korea, Air Philippines with flights to and from Hong Kong.

# Cocktales

From page B3

leged in a previous item here, to issue the gaming license to the now delayed Thunderbird casino in Poro Point.

A Pagcor official, in the meantime, acknowledged that the local diocese of the Catholic Church is still opposed to the planned casino, which explains Thunderbird's continuing difficulty in securing the gaming license.

Thunderbird's second after its pioneering Binangonan venture, the La Union casino and resort had been originally scheduled to open in time for last year's Christmas season.

Apparently, the fact that Thunderbird is being chaired by former Finance Secretary and AIM president Roberto de Ocampo still would not move the La Union bishop.

### Money-go-round

• AMONG the big banks, Chinabank pays the least per diem, P500, to its board members for every board meeting. The board, in turn, is spurred to performance by the generous 4-percent profit share in net earnings.

• MANUEL V. PANGILINAN is nearly a half billionaire, going by his PLDT shareholdings alone. The chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. now owns 210,779 company shares, which at Friday's record close of P2,000, is already worth more than P421 million.

• IF Coke is being decimated by C2, part of the reason is that the Gokongwei green tea drink and beverage division is being headed by an ex-Coca Cola executive, Edwin Totanes. To further eat up into carbonated drink market, C2 during the Holy Week launched a "sparkling" version of the popular green tea drink.

### Heard through the grapevine

FORT Bonifacio Development Corp. plans to build a new road and link it with the Pasay Road end in Dasmariñas Village to relieve the growing bottleneck at McKinley Road.

The millionaire residents of Dasma are expected to oppose the road link, while the Ayalas are said to be in favor of the plan, now that they control The Fort as well.

*(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)*

# Gov't urged ...

From page B1

But despite Napocor's good fiscal consolidation, PSALM (which took over the power plants of Napocor) failed to dispose the required 70 percent of generating assets in 2005. Only 11 percent of these assets were sold last year.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, PSALM should privatize 70 percent or 31 power-generating assets before it can declare open-access, which was originally targeted for July 2006.

"This setback is a cause for concern in a country where high power rates and unreliable supply are considered major impediments to an investment climate conducive for growth. Efforts to fast track the sale of generation assets based on lessons learned last year should be forefront this year," the WB study said.

On pension reform, the WB study said the financial condition of the SSS, which was serving private sector employees, remained "weak."

"Despite improving actuarial balance, a carefully planned and phased-in increase in contribution rates and rationalization of benefit payouts, together with other parametric and structural changes, are needed to ensure SSS' medium- and long-term viability," the study said.

Without these reforms, the study said contingent liabilities arising from pension obligations may further undermine public finance in the future.

"On the other hand, the GSIS needs to find alternative investment options for its excess liquidity, diversify its portfolio, and obtain better returns," the study said.

"In addition, GSIS needs to reduce operating and other expenses (which are more than three times those of SSS), improve the management of its loan portfolio and its management information systems," it added.

The Philippines trimmed its public sector deficit to only P106 billion in end-2005 or P74.3 billion better than target due to the improved fiscal position of the national government and major state-owned corporations like the Napocor.

# Abaca rules hit

By Christine A. Gaylican

LOCAL FURNITURE and handicraft industries face losing their niche in the international market due to stricter regulations on the harvesting of abaca products.

Furniture and handicraft manufacturers claimed that shipments for export in the first quarter have been delayed as the harvesting of dried abaca leaf sheaths—used primarily for designs—has been prohibited since March with the issuance of Executive Order No. 502.

Mecca Mfg. Philippines Inc. president Noel Cunanan said in an interview that the dwindling supply of abaca raw materials has slowed down furniture production and delayed shipments, specifically to K-Mart Stores in the United States.

Furniture and handicraft manufacturers contributed 20 percent or about $16 million to the $80 million in export earnings generated from abaca-based products last year, data from the Department of Agriculture's Fiber Industry Development Authority (Fida) showed.

"We were surprised by the sudden effectivity of the EO 502 that still has no implementing rules and regulations," he said.

Malacañang issued the EO on grounds that the "indiscriminate" harvesting and cutting of abaca leaf sheaths has contributed to the spreading of plant diseases.

# Internet cafe rules up

By Abigail L. Ho

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission will soon implement a two-year-old circular requiring all Internet cafés to register with the regulatory body every year to renew their business permits.

Raymond Ricafort, president of the Netopia Internet café chain, said registration should start by the third quarter of the year, with the registration to be issued to be good for the 2007 business year.

The circular, although issued as early as two years ago, was not implemented as no Internet café wanted to register with the regulatory body.

Under the registration scheme, Internet cafes would have to itemize all its telecommunications-related services such as Internet access, online gaming, and voice over Internet protocol (VoIP).

They need not register such services as document and photo printing, typing and other non-telecommunications services, he added.

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| 415,000 | **34,583** | **23,056** | 18,445 | 13,145 | 10,519 | 9,055 |
| 441,500 | 37,833 | 25,894 | 20,674 | 14,733 | 11,790 | 10,150 |
| 415,000 | **34,583** | **23,056** | **17,292** | 12,978 | 10,386 | 8,941 |
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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

# Gokongwei firm readies 2 property ventures

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ROBINSONS LAND CORP., THE MALL and residential developer of the Gokongwei family, is launching two major residential projects within the next two years, targeting the Binondo Chinese-Filipino communities and overseas Filipino workers, general manager Danilo Ignacio said in a briefing with reporters on Friday.

RLC is starting construction next year of Otis 888, its second upscale townhomes cluster project on the four-hectare Manila Gas property that the company recently acquired from the government.

Otis 888, which is on Otis Road beside UN Avenue in Manila, will consist of 200 units spread across three hectares.

The units will feature three- and four-bedroom, three-story townhomes.

A three-bedroom unit is typically 138 square meters in size, and will be priced at P6.6 million. Four bedroom units are available in two sizes—168 square meters for P8 million and 188 square meters for P9.5 million.

Construction of Otis 888 units may start in the second quarter of next year. The turnover of units is targeted in late December next year until 2008.

RLC is also planning to put up a three- to four-story mall on the remaining one hectare lot of the old Manila Gas lot. A call center will take up 10,000 square meters of mall space and may cater to 1,500 to 2,000 seats. The mall is slated to be opened in 2007.

Another major residential project in the pipeline will rise on RLC's 9.3-hectare lot in Merville, Parañaque City. Set to be launched by the third quarter this year, the project will offer two-bedroom houses at P2 million each and target families of overseas Filipino workers.

RLC is also in talks with a private owner of a lot in Fort Bonifacio on a possible residential condominium.

# URC allots ₱5.6B for expansion

UNIVERSAL ROBINA CORP. (URC) SAID IT was keeping its target of spending P5.6 billion this year to expand its branded food line, international product lines and sugar mill, URC president Lance Gokongwei said following the company's stockholders' meeting last week.

Gokongwei said that in line with its international expansion, URC would continue to expand its product lines in Thailand.

Locally, URC is targeting to raise sugar milling capacity to 5,000 tons of cane a day this year from 4,500 tons. It plans to further increase this capacity to 9,000 tons a day in 2007.

URC earlier said it was also allocating P2.37 billion out of its expenditure budget to expand its sugar milling and refinery through Southern Negros Development Corp.

Aside from the sugar mill, some P2.84 billion of URC's capital expenditure will be spent to expand its branded consumer food operations, specifically its beverage line, as well as grow its presence in international markets such as China, Asean countries.

In the beverage segment, Gokongwei said URC launched a few weeks ago a manufacturing plant for its successful C2 green tea product in Vietnam.

After the success of its C2 green tea brand, URC also launched Bull Fighter, a new energy drink, and Rush, a fitness drink.

Meantime, URC claimed that the Pasig City government's closure of URC's chocolate plant in Bagong Ilog, Pasig City, was "unjustified and had no legal basis."

URC said it would meet with the Pasig City government to immediately lift its order. Roughly 900 workers of the plant will be affected by the plant's closure. URC claimed the plant has passed all air emission standards.

*Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

# Mining permit row derails investment deal

By Christine A. Gaylican

INVESTORS HAVE BECOME HESITANT TO pursue possible joint-venture arrangements with Manila Mining Corp. after the government held approval of the mining firm's exploration permit, a company official said.

MMC chair Felipe Yap said in an interview that although three mining firms have signified interest in its copper-gold project in Surigao del Norte, they have remained non-committal due to the uncertainty surrounding the renewal of the firm's exploration permit, which is now awaiting approval of Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Ivanhoe Mines Ltd., Anglo-American Plc. and East Asia Minerals Corp. are in discussions with MMC for a possible joint venture in the latter's Kalayaan copper-gold property.

"They (the mining firms) could not fully commit to the project without the EP (exploration permit)," Yap told reporters last week.

DENR sources said that MMC was able to comply with the submission of pertinent documents, including the copies of Resolution No. 2005-127 of the Sangguniang Bayan of Placer, Surigao del Norte, favorably endorsing the renewal of MMC's EP-XIII-014, and the Memorandum of Agreement signed with the municipal government of Placer.

The MOA showed, among others, that no exploration activities would be conducted by MMC within the proposed water source in Barangay Anislagan and that MMC would see to it that the existing water source in barangay Macalaya and Boyongan of the same municipality are not be affected by exploration activities.

All these documents were given by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to the Office of the DENR Secretary for final clearance and approval. Secretary Reyes said these were still being reviewed.

MMC, an affiliate of Lepanto Consolidated Corp., said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the Canadian mining firm East Asia Minerals had already made a formal and competitive proposal.

GGcA Club Shares

SEC License Broker #007575 • As of April 24, 2006

| CLUB | SELLER | BUYER |
|---|---|---|
| Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino) | 1,100,000 | 1,050,000 |
| Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner) | 1,200,000 | 1,050,000 |
| Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club | Please Call | - |
| Baguio Country Club | Please Call | 520,000 |
| Calatagan Golf Club "A" | 40,000 | - |
| Calatagan Golf Club "B" | 70,000 | - |
| Camp John Hay | 200,000 | 170,000 |
| Canlubang | 550,000 | 400,000 |
| Capitol Hills | 60,000 | - |
| Cebu Country Club | 1,500,000 | 1,350,000 |
| Celebrity Sports Club | 120,000 | 100,000 |
| Club Filipino | 100,000 | - |
| Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C" | Please Call | |
| Forest Hills "A" | 100,000 | - |
| Forest Hills "B" | 200,000 | 160,000 |
| Forest Hills "C" | 200,000 | - |
| Makati Sports Club "A" | 180,000 | - |
| Makati Sports Club "B" | 250,000 | - |
| Manila Golf (Corporate) | - | 11,500,000 |
| Manila Golf (Individual) | - | 10,500,000 |
| Manila Polo | 2,600,000 | 2,250,000 |
| Manila Southwoods "A" | 340,000 | 300,000 |
| Manila Southwoods "B" | 600,000 | 700,000 |
| Manila Yacht Club | 310,000 | 200,000 |
| Mimosa (Individual) | - | 180,000 |
| Mimosa (Corporate) | - | 500,000 |
| Mt. Malarayat Gold "A" | 220,000 | - |
| Mt. Malarayat Gold "C" | 350,000 | - |
| Orchard Golf Club "A" | 200,000 | 150,000 |
| Orchard Golf Club "B" | 370,000 | 350,000 |
| Orchard Golf Club "C" | 300,000 | - |
| Quezon City Sports Club | 170,000 | 140,000 |
| Rockwell Club | Please Call | - |
| Spa & Lodge | 450,000 | 400,000 |
| Sta. Elena "A" | 1,200,000 | 1,100,000 |
| Subic Bay Golf | 200,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Country Club | 360,000 | 320,000 |
| Tagaytay Highlands | 680,000 | 600,000 |
| Tagaytay Midlands | 650,000 | 600,000 |
| Valle Verde (Individual) | 50,000 | - |
| Valle Verde (Corporate) | 200,000 | 150,000 |
| Valley Golf | 230,000 | 180,000 |
| Wack-Wack Golf Club | 6,300,000 | 6,200,000 |

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SHARES AVAILABLE

| CLUB | SELLER | BUYER |
|---|---|---|
| Alabang Country Club A/B* | 1,100,000/1,200,000* | 1,000,000 |
| Alta Vista B/Corp.* | - | Pls. Call/300,000* |
| Baguio Country Club | - | 500,000 |
| Camp John Hay | - | Pls. Call |
| Canlubang Golf | 850,000 | Pls. Call |
| Canyon Woods | 120,000 | - |
| Capitol Hills | 60,000 | - |
| Cebu Country Club | Pls. Call | 1,350,000 |
| Celebrity Sports | 120,000 | 100,000 |
| City Sports Club Cebu | - | 380,000 |
| Club Filipino | 110,000 | - |
| Eagleridge A/B*/C** | 330,000*/Pls. Call | 150,000/Pls. Call* |
| Eastridge A/B* | Pls. Call | - |
| Evercrest | 65,000 | - |
| Fairways & Bluewater | Pls. Call | Pls. Call |
| Forest Hills A/B*/C** | 120,000/200,000* | Pls. Call* |
| Luisita Golf | Pls. Call | 300,000 |
| Manila Golf Corporate | Pls. Call | 11,500,000 |
| Manila Golf Individual | Pls. Call | 11,000,000 |
| Manila Polo | Pls. Call | 2,300,000 |
| Manila Southwoods A/B* | 350,000/750,000* | 300,000/700,000* |
| Makati Sports Club | 160,000 | 180,000 |
| Manila Yacht Club Ind. | 350,000 | |
| Metropolitan Club A/B* | 180,000 | 150,000 |
| Mimosa Ind./C3*/C3** | Pls. Call | 150,000/300,000*/420,000** |
| Mt. Malarayat A | 230,000 | - |
| Orchard A/B*/C** | 180,000/Pls. Call*/400,000** | 150,000 |
| Punta Fuego | 400,000 | - |
| Quezon City Sports Club | 160,000 | Pls. Call |
| Riviera Golf A/B*/C** | 60,000/160,000*/250,000** | 130,000* |
| Rockwell Leisure Club | Pls. Call | 180,000 |
| Royale Tagaytay CC | 60,000 | - |
| Sherwood A/B*/C** | 70,000/150,000** | 80,000* |
| Sta. Elena Golf A/B* | 1,150,000 | 1,100,000/1,650,000* |
| The Palms Country Club | 500,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Country Club | 330,000 | 310,000 |
| Tagaytay Highlands | 680,000 | - |
| Tagaytay Midlands | Pls. Call | 600,000 |
| The Country Club | 2,000,000 | - |
| Tower Club | 140,000 | - |
| Valley Golf | 210,000 | - |
| Valle Verde Ind. | 100,000 | - |
| Wack Wack Golf | 6,250,000 | 6,175,000 |

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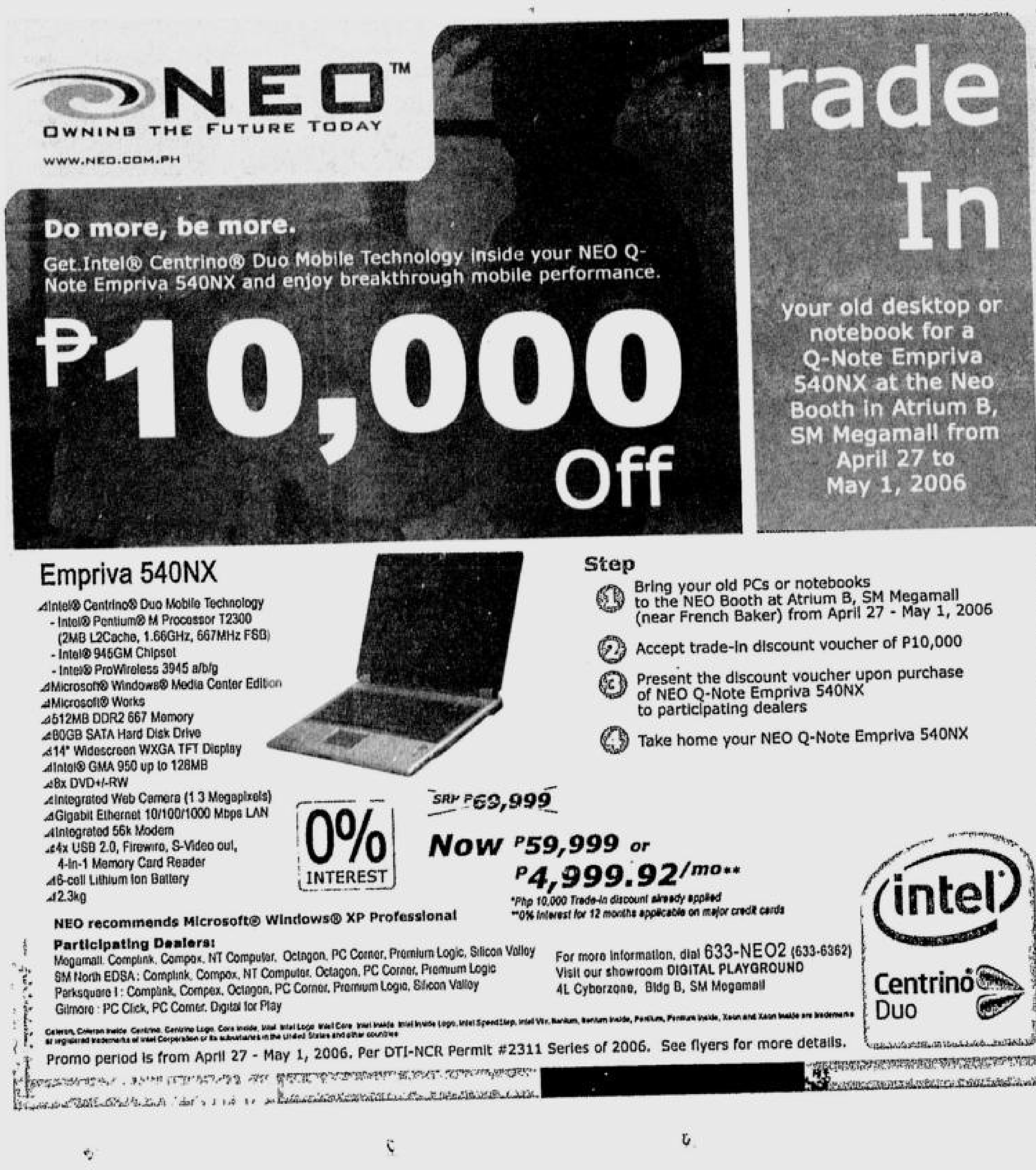

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- Microsoft® Windows® Media Center Edition
- Microsoft® Works
- 512MB DDR2 667 Memory
- 80GB SATA Hard Disk Drive
- 14" Widescreen WXGA TFT Display
- Intel® GMA 950 up to 128MB
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Promo period is from April 27 - May 1, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit #2311 Series of 2006. See flyers for more details.

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 21, 2006)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FINANCIAL** | | | | | |
| **BANKS** | | | | | |
| Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc. | 3.95 | 3.95 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 2,000 |
| Banco de Oro Univ. Bank | 35 | 35.5 | 35 | 35 | 2,373,800 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 62 | 62 | 61.5 | 62 | 551,900 |
| China Banking Corp. | 780 | 800 | 780 | 800 | 2,040 |
| Citystate Savings Bank | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19.75 | 19.75 | 500 |
| Export and Ind. Bank Inc. | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 5,320,000 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 71.5 | 71.5 | 71.5 | 71.5 | 86,900 |
| International Exch. Bank | 32.5 | 33 | 32.5 | 33 | 28,000 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 39 | 39.5 | 38.5 | 39 | 300,900 |
| Philippine National Bank | 34 | 34 | 34 | 34 | 23,000 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 37 | 37.5 | 37 | 37.5 | 11,400 |
| Rizal Comm. Banking Corp. | 14.5 | 15 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 80,000 |
| Security Bank Corp. | 46.5 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 5,100 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 38 | 39.5 | 38 | 39.5 | 8,400 |
| **OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS** | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 100,000 |
| Filipino Fund Inc. | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 2,000 |
| First Metro Invest. Corp. | 27.5 | 28 | 27.5 | 28 | 5,300 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 3240 | 3240 | 3240 | 3240 | 10 |
| PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc. | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 80,000 |
| Phil. Stock Exchange Inc. | 185 | 185 | 185 | 185 | 60 |
| Sun Life Financial Inc. | 2140 | 2150 | 2140 | 2150 | 360 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 8,314,000 |
| **INDUSTRIAL** | | | | | |
| **ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER** | | | | | |
| First Gen Corp. | 44.5 | 45 | 44.5 | 45 | 58,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 44.5 | 45 | 44.5 | 45 | 126,900 |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 13.25 | 13.25 | 13 | 13 | 42,400 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 19.5 | 19.75 | 19.5 | 19.5 | 780,200 |
| Manila Water Co. Inc. | 6.4 | 6.5 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 4,083,000 |
| Petron Corp. | 4.35 | 4.4 | 4.35 | 4.35 | 4,981,000 |
| East Asia Power Res. Corp. | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 530,000 |
| Trans-Asia Oil and Energy | 1.06 | 1.06 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 639,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Cadp Group Corp. | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 131,000 |
| Ginebra San Miguel Inc. | 21.25 | 21.75 | 21 | 21.25 | 304,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 35.5 | 37 | 35.5 | 37 | 276,200 |
| Pancake House Inc. | 4 | 4.15 | 4 | 4.1 | 110,000 |
| RFM Corp. | 0.77 | 0.79 | 0.77 | 0.79 | 250,000 |
| Roxas Holdings Inc. | 3.05 | 3.05 | 2.95 | 3.05 | 1,629,000 |
| Swift Food Inc. | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.19 | 0.19 | 60,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 60 | 60 | 59.5 | 60 | 50,200 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 82 | 82 | 81.5 | 82 | 94,700 |
| Universal Robina Corp. | 20.5 | 20.75 | 20.25 | 20.75 | 1,397,400 |
| Vitarich Corp. | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 200,000 |
| **CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE &ALLIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Southeast Asian Cement | 0.3 | 0.35 | 0.3 | 0.34 | 18,690,000 |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.48 | 3,891,000 |
| Fortune Cement Corp. | 0.88 | 0.95 | 0.88 | 0.95 | 600,000 |
| Holcim Philippines Inc. | 4.65 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.75 | 2,501,000 |
| **CHEMICALS** | | | | | |
| Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 140,000 |
| **DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS** | | | | | |
| Active Alliance Inc. | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 100,000 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.075 | 24,200,000 |
| Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp. | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 2,000 |
| Steniel Manufacturing | 0.47 | 0.58 | 0.47 | 0.54 | 3,410,000 |
| **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| Abacus Con Res & Hdg A | 0.0075 | 0.008 | 0.0075 | 0.0075 | 87,000,000 |
| Ayala Corp. | 367.5 | 375 | 367.5 | 370 | 293,560 |
| Alsons Cons. Res. Inc. | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 0.51 | 100,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 5.4 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 1,021,000 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 0.024 | 0.024 | 0.024 | 0.024 | 1,600,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | 2.7 | 2.75 | 2.65 | 2.65 | 2,680,000 |
| APC Group Inc. | 0.215 | 0.22 | 0.215 | 0.215 | 900,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | 0.0085 | 0.0085 | 0.0085 | 0.0085 | 108,000,000 |
| Anglo Phil Holdings Corp. | 0.98 | 1 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 2,120,000 |
| Baguio Gold Holdings Corp. | 1.06 | 1.06 | 1.06 | 1.06 | 90,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.95 | 0.96 | 2,350,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 3.95 | 3.95 | 3.9 | 3.95 | 1,004,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 2.8 | 3.05 | 2.8 | 3 | 10,957,000 |
| House of Investments Inc. | 1.38 | 1.54 | 1.38 | 1.5 | 710,000 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 6.4 | 6.4 | 6.1 | 6.3 | 440,000 |
| Medco Holdings | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 570,000 |
| Pacifica | 0.011 | 0.013 | 0.011 | 0.012 | 26,300,000 |
| Prime Orion Phils. Inc. | 0.225 | 0.23 | 0.225 | 0.23 | 800,000 |
| Prime Media Holdings Inc. | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 55,000 |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp. | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 1.52 | 5,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | 0.56 | 0.56 | 0.56 | 0.56 | 140,000 |
| Sinophil Corp. | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 540,000 |
| SM Investments Corp. | 225 | 233 | 224 | 233 | 261,910 |
| South China Resources Inc. | 0.84 | 0.85 | 0.84 | 0.85 | 180,000 |
| Seafront Resources Corp. | 0.59 | 0.65 | 0.59 | 0.65 | 110,000 |
| Unioil Res. & Holdings Co | 0.065 | 0.0725 | 0.065 | 0.0725 | 36,200,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.125 | 0.135 | 2,450,000 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 11.25 | 11.75 | 11.25 | 11.75 | 45,471,600 |
| Araneta Properties Inc. | 0.36 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 200,000 |
| Belle Corp. | 1.28 | 1.3 | 1.28 | 1.28 | 6,711,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.29 | 0.33 | 0.29 | 0.32 | 5,530,000 |
| Cebu Holdings Inc. | 1.94 | 2.06 | 1.94 | 2.04 | 1,456,000 |
| C&P Homes Inc. | 1.74 | 1.8 | 1.74 | 1.78 | 37,000 |
| Cebu Prop. Vent B | 0.96 | 0.98 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 30,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.205 | 0.21 | 0.205 | 0.21 | 1,000,000 |
| Elb Realty Developers Inc. | 0.18 | 0.2 | 0.18 | 0.2 | 1,100,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.68 | 0.7 | 27,380,000 |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc. | 0.67 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 20,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 1.4 | 1.42 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 6,480,000 |
| Highlands Prime Inc. | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 50,000 |
| Kuok Phil. Properties | 0.24 | 0.245 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 1,490,000 |
| Fil-Estate Land, Inc. | 0.57 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 50,000 |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. A | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 400,000 |
| Marsteel Cons. Inc. B | 0.016 | 0.016 | 0.016 | 0.016 | 1,700,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.27 | 0.28 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 16,380,000 |
| MRC Allied Ind. Inc. | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 1,000,000 |
| Robinsons Land Corp. | 9.1 | 9.2 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 223,000 |
| Phil Realty And Holdings | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 750,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 1.6 | 1.62 | 1.6 | 1.62 | 524,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 7.8 | 7.9 | 7.7 | 7.9 | 7,210,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 5,270,000 |
| **SERVICE** | | | | | |
| **MEDIA** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 12.5 | 12.75 | 12.5 | 12.75 | 31,000 |
| Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp. | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 19,000 |
| **TELECOMMUNICATIONS** | | | | | |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.95 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.96 | 760,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 885 | 890 | 880 | 880 | 18,530 |
| Pilipino Tel. Corp. | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.85 | 2.9 | 970,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 1955 | 2000 | 1930 | 2000 | 169,980 |
| **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** | | | | | |
| Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.205 | 0.205 | 0.195 | 0.195 | 3,700,000 |
| Imperial Res. | 0.012 | 0.013 | 0.012 | 0.013 | 3,200,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 1.34 | 1.42 | 1.34 | 1.42 | 199,000 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.046 | 0.046 | 0.046 | 0.046 | 1,000,000 |
| ISM Communications Corp. | 0.05 | 0.0525 | 0.05 | 0.0525 | 4,500,000 |
| Philweb Corp. | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.028 | 0.029 | 663,900,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 2.42 | 2.42 | 2.42 | 2.42 | 20,000 |
| Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp. | 1.68 | 1.68 | 1.68 | 1.68 | 3,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 163,500 |
| Keppel Phils. Marine Inc. | 1 | 1 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 300,000 |
| **HOTEL & LEISURE** | | | | | |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | 1.7 | 1.72 | 1.68 | 1.72 | 785,000 |
| Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 100,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | 0.57 | 0.58 | 0.55 | 0.56 | 2,330,000 |
| **EDUCATION** | | | | | |
| Ipeople Inc. | 3.1 | 4 | 3.1 | 3.5 | 1,459,000 |
| **DIVERSIFIED SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Macroasia Corp. | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.04 | 2.08 | 3,176,000 |
| Paxys Inc. | 9.4 | 9.6 | 9.4 | 9.6 | 1,694,000 |
| **MINING & OIL** | | | | | |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. A | 2.8 | 2.85 | 2.75 | 2.85 | 3,360,000 |
| Apex Mining Co. Inc. B | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.75 | 2.8 | 2,954,000 |
| Abra Mining & Industrial | 0.0085 | 0.0085 | 0.008 | 0.008 | 260,000,000 |
| Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't | 7.7 | 7.7 | 7.4 | 7.5 | 2,459,000 |
| Benguet Corp. A | 13.5 | 13.5 | 12.75 | 13.25 | 147,300 |
| Benguet Corp. B | 36.5 | 36.5 | 36.5 | 36.5 | 100 |
| Dizon Copper Silver Mines | 2.04 | 2.04 | 2.02 | 2.02 | 52,000 |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A | 0.37 | 0.39 | 0.36 | 0.39 | 25,390,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B | 0.4 | 0.41 | 0.39 | 0.41 | 29,050,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. A | 0.025 | 0.027 | 0.024 | 0.026 | 1,446,700,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. B | 0.026 | 0.03 | 0.025 | 0.03 | 644,600,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.008 | 0.0085 | 0.008 | 0.0085 | 546,000,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. A | 3.75 | 3.95 | 3.65 | 3.85 | 11,543,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. B | 3.8 | 3.9 | 3.65 | 3.9 | 13,111,000 |
| Semirara Mining Corp. | 31 | 31.5 | 30.5 | 31 | 513,300 |
| United Paragon Mining Co. | 0.38 | 0.39 | 0.38 | 0.38 | 470,000 |
| Vulcan Ind'l | 0.46 | 0.46 | 0.44 | 0.44 | 800,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Basic Consolidated Inc. | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 12,520,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. A | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.011 | 0.012 | 486,200,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 103,900,000 |
| The Philodrill Corp. A | 0.78 | 0.81 | 0.78 | 0.8 | 1,270,000 |
| The Philodrill Corp. B | 0.7 | 0.81 | 0.7 | 0.81 | 1,060,000 |
| Petroenergy Res. Corp. | 7.2 | 7.7 | 6.4 | 7.2 | 4,485,000 |
| **PREFERRED** | | | | | |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series T | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 2,700 |
| PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 1,000 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series V | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 300 |
| **WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr) | 13 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 180,400 |

## CURRENCIES

| April 21, 2006<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.812018 | 1.000000 | 51.3820 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.006911 | 0.008511 | 0.4373 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.444417 | 1.778800 | 91.3983 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.104719 | 0.128962 | 6.6263 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.635134 | 0.782167 | 40.1893 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.712984 | 0.878040 | 45.1155 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.508242 | 0.625900 | 32.1600 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.598612 | 0.737191 | 37.8783 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 2.154065 | 2.652731 | 136.3026 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.216503 | 0.266624 | 13.6997 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.506656 | 0.623947 | 32.0596 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000092 | 0.000113 | 0.0058 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.021471 | 0.026441 | 1.3586 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.221108 | 0.272294 | 13.9910 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.231500 | 63.2769 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.265365 | 0.326797 | 16.7915 |
| Brazil | Real | 0.382667 | 0.471254 | 24.2140 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134043 | 0.165074 | 8.4818 |
| India | Rupee | 0.018021 | 0.022193 | 1.1403 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.221833 | 0.273187 | 14.0369 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.073575 | 0.090608 | 4.6556 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.508655 | 0.626409 | 32.1861 |
| Norway | Kroner | 0.128121 | 0.157781 | 8.1071 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 0.013538 | 0.016672 | 0.8566 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.133941 | 0.164948 | 8.4754 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000856 | 0.001054 | 0.0542 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.107712 | 0.132647 | 6.8157 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.015643 | 0.019264 | 0.9898 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.025179 | 0.031008 | 1.5933 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 0.000378 | 0.000466 | 0.0239 |

# Gov't expects interest savings on foreign loans

## Continued peso strengthening to further bring down debt servicing requirement

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT STANDS TO save P5.8 billion in interest payments on loans this year and more than P100 billion in the succeeding years up to 2010 due to the strengthening of the peso, estimates from the budget department showed.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee, the interagency body tasked with setting the government's economic policies and targets, had set its budget program for this year based on the assumption that the peso would settle at between 55 and 57 to $1.

To reflect the strengthening of the peso, the DBCC revised its foreign exchange assumption for 2006 to an average of between 51 and 53 to $1.

Since the government has already factored in a P55-57:$1 exchange rate in its proposed program for this year, the appreciation of the peso would mean the amount to be paid for maturing foreign obligations would be lower to result in opportunity savings.

Under the proposed 2006 national budget of about P1 trillion, more than 30 percent was earmarked for interest payments. This amount is lower by P5.8 billion than the original projection due to a stronger peso, currently at the 51-to-a-dollar level.

Using the assumption that the peso would continue strengthening in the medium term or, at least, remain at its current level, estimates showed interest payments programmed for 2007 would go down by P5.9 billion. Interest payments are expected to further slide by P28 billion in 2008, P33 billion in 2009, and P45 billion in 2010.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran earlier said that on a net basis, the strengthening of the peso was beneficial for the government as it helped improve the country's fiscal position.

Although a stronger peso means lower collection of import duties by the Bureau of Customs, the losses can be offset by the resulting decline in the foreign debt servicing requirement, he explained.

The appreciation of the peso is welcomed by fiscal authorities because of its positive impact on the government's debt standing, but is being criticized by exporters whose incomes are adversely affected by this development.

Exporters have asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to intervene in the market and help temper the appreciation of the peso.

The central bank, however, was not so keen on intervening in the market as it preferred to let the exchange rate be determined largely by market forces. Instead, it offered to make available a loan facility for financially troubled exporters.

The central bank said it believed exporters would feel the pinch of the stronger peso only in the short term. It said the sector would be able to adjust soon and post robust growth.

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# Why your plane ticket may be overpriced

### QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

*Honesto C. General*

AFTER 9/11, THE PREMIUM FOR TERRORism insurance, especially on airlines, soared to the skies. But instead of raising the fares by factoring in the premium as additional operating cost, the airline industry decided (and this seemed to be on a worldwide basis) to slap an "insurance surcharge" as a separate item in the ticket.

In 2002 when the practice started, the Civil Aeronautics Board authorized the airlines to apply a whole range of insurance surcharges. For example, a passenger on a domestic flight paid P300 as insurance surcharge. The CAB reviewed the surcharges every six months.

Since 2002, the surcharges have gone up. Today, the P300 surcharge is only for flights in Luzon. The surcharge for Visayas has been raised to P420, and P600 for Mindanao.

For international flights, the passenger surcharge in 2002 was a mere $6. Today, the surcharge for flights to US or Canada is $49. There is a range of surcharges for flights to other parts of the world.

Finally, there is another range of surcharges on cargo shipped on international flights.

I see the merit of the insurance surcharge as a separate item in the ticket. This is called unbundling. You see this in your electricity and water bills.

But, the way the insurance surcharge was instituted here is questionable under our existing insurance and tax laws.

First, the surcharge is insurance premium, pure and simple. As such, the government agency that has the power to approve it is the Insurance Commission, not the Civil Aeronautics Board.

Simple rules of courtesy should have prompted the CAB to refer the airlines' request to apply the surcharge to the Insurance Commission. But the CAB just went ahead without even a by your leave. The people at the CAB are surely qualified to supervise the airlines. But insurance is not their cup of tea.

If the CAB had consulted the Insurance Commission, the eagle-eyed staff there would have asked the airlines to show that the surcharges were fair to the public and adequate to cover the risks. And, whenever the airlines wanted to raise the surcharges, they would have had to go through the wringer again at the Insurance Commission.

Second, the authority to the airlines to collect the premiums violates the insurance code in another respect. Only duly licensed insurance companies, brokers and agents can collect premiums from the public.

Third, and this is the most crucial point to a constantly cash-strapped government, the insurance surcharge is subject to three taxes: 12 percent value-added, 12.5 percent documentary stamp, and one-half of 1 percent local government tax. Is the Bureau of Internal Revenue collecting these taxes from the airlines?

The taxes that BIR should collect are nothing to sneeze at. The taxable surcharges the airlines are collecting from the public run into tens of billions of pesos every year.

Collecting insurance surcharges may be a worldwide practice today. But, many parts of the world do not have the kind of insurance code we have, which we copied from American codes. Our tax laws also differ from those of the rest of the world.

In this matter of insurance surcharges on airline tickets, worldwide practice will just have to give way to Philippine laws.

# LRTA posts profit, pays ₱23M in income taxes

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUthority (LRTA) last year reversed 23 straight years of losses, turning in a profit of P68 million.

Its 2005 financial performance enabled LRTA to promptly pay the Bureau of Internal Revenue P23 million in income taxes.

Revenue Commissioner Jose C. Bunag said LRTA, under Administrator Mel Robles, was able to raise its gross revenue even without any fare increase by controlling expenses and purchases, and having trains fixed and put into service to transport more passengers.

A stronger peso also helped the government corporation generate foreign exchange gains.

Bunag said LRTA's tax payment of P23 million was a big improvement from the P1.5 million it paid in 2004.

Bunag said he would like to see more government corporations become profitable so they could help ease the budget deficit and generate the revenues the government needs.

"Strict monitoring of purchases and maintenance costs have significantly brought down LRTA's expenses, while improved efficiency of its operations raised passenger volume, resulting in higher passenger revenues," Robles said.

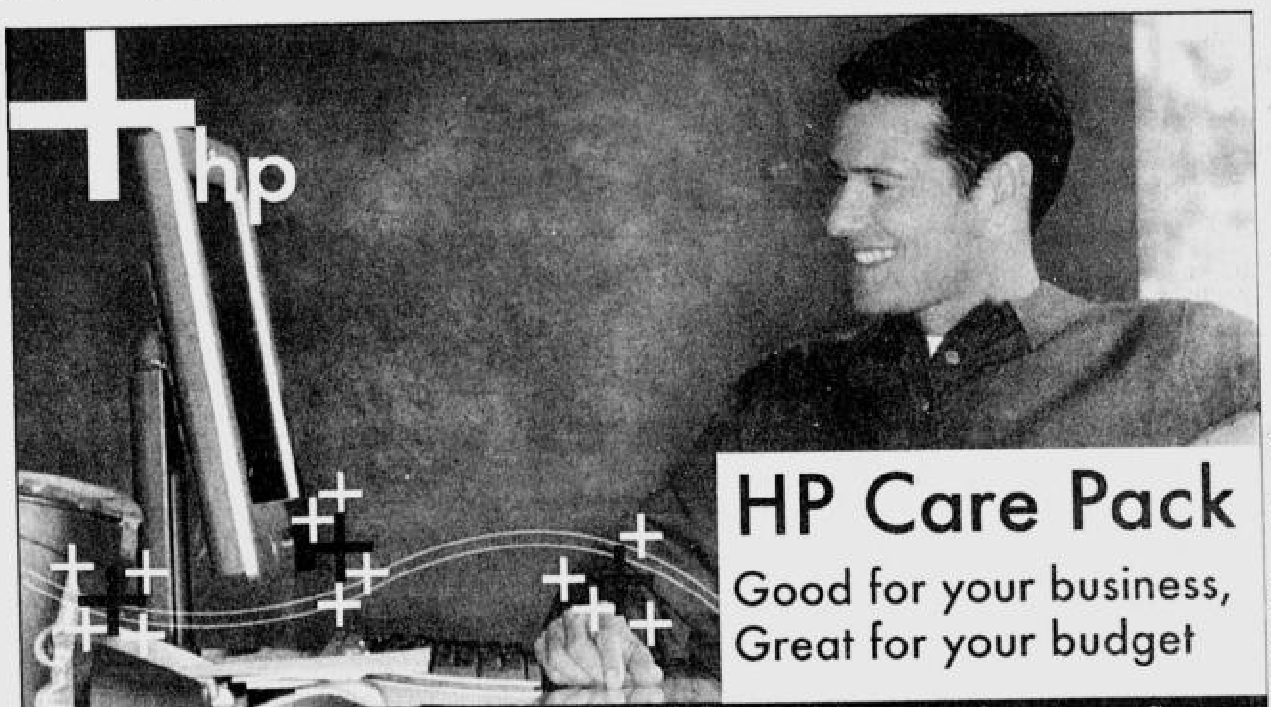
LRTA Line 1 (Baclaran to Monumento) surpassed its annual target of 74,282,309 passengers and had 76,809,417 passengers in 2005. LRTA Line 2's (Santolan, Pasig to Recto) target ridership of 29,391,704 was exceeded at 30,214,022.

For the early part of this year, LRTA has already deployed 75 light rail vehicles compared to 64 trains when Robles took over in September 2004. Robles had decommissioned trains repaired and put back on track.

The improved efficiency resulted in a new peak passenger record of 428,000 per day, from the previous high of 338,000 before Robles took over.

Improved procurement procedures and operation costs allowed LRTA to drastically reduce its net losses from P1.463 billion in 2004 to P829.75 million in 2005.

"Enhancing the operational process by finding ways to maximize revenues while bringing down costs will enable GOCCs to earn and contribute their fair share to the government," Robles said.



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# DBP to offer $130M worth of hybrid notes

## Roadshows to be held in Singapore, HK and London

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

STATE-OWNED DEVELOPMENT BANK OF the Philippines will offer to the global market $130 million in perpetual bonds on May 15.

DBP set the schedule after obtaining the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' approval for the issuance of these hybrid notes.

The bank conduct roadshows for the float in Singapore, Hong Kong and London on the third week of May.

"That will be the book-building period and we hope to close it by Friday (May 19) of the same week," a DBP official said.

This will be DBP's first attempt to venture into the foreign capital markets. The DBP official said it was a good time to do so as the offshore market was "very liquid."

The hybrid notes will be perpetual bonds with call option after 10 years.

A call option gives the issuer the right (but not the obligation) to retire the bonds within a specific period.

"If we don't call it after 10 years, it will be very expensive for us," the official explained.

The indicative net yield for the perpetual bonds, which will be listed in Singapore, was between 8 and 9 percent, the official said.

The perpetual bond offering was being arranged by Barclays and Deutsche Bank.

These notes are eligible as Hybrid tier 1 or core capital. They have equity-like features that come in the form of unsecured subordinated debt or preferred shares with step-up feature.

Under the BSP rules, hybrid tier 1 capital must be available to absorb losses of the bank on a going concern basis. This requirement sets it apart from other debt securities and gives this instrument equity-like features.

After the offshore offering, the DBP plans to go back to the domestic market to raise P7 billion of a planned P10-billion tier 2 capital-raising. The bank plans to issue the local subordinated notes in three tranches later this year.

These fund-raising activities are expected to improve DBP's capital adequacy ratio to 38 percent from 25 percent.

"We'll have a capital base that will enable us to devote our efforts to developmental lending. We hope that in the next five years, we won't have any more funding needs," DBP president Reynaldo David had said.

**FUND-RAISING** efforts are expected to build the bank's capital base to a level that will enable it to focus more on developmental lending in the coming years.

## *Ginebra to expand overseas markets*

**By Elizabeth L. Sanchez**

HARD LIQUOR FIRM GINEBRA San Miguel Inc. is studying the possibility of expanding its export markets after the completion of its bottling and distillery plant in Thailand.

This was contained in San Miguel Capital Funding Ltd.'s preliminary offering circular on its hybrid securities offering. SMCF is a subsidiary of San Miguel Corp., which also owns 79.6 percent of Ginebra.

Ginebra through CNT Wine and Liquor Co. Ltd., a joint venture with Thai Life Group of Companies, is currently building a bottling and distillery plant in Thailand. The facility is expected to start commercial operations by mid-2007.

The joint venture was formed through Ginebra's acquisition of a 40-percent stake in CNT Wine and Liquor, a subsidiary of the Thai Life Group of Companies.

Ginebra at present exports to Thailand, Taiwan, Korea and the Middle East. In 2005, exports accounted for 5.7 percent of Ginebra's total hard liquor sales.

Ginebra wants to expand its overseas markets to include the Unites States, Mainland China and India.

Competition in the export markets is deemed intense with competitors including a number of international hard liquor producers. In the Philippines, Ginebra has one distillery and three production facilities in Cabuyao in Laguna, Santa Barbara in Pangasinan and Cebu.

Ginebra offers a range of hard liquor brands in the premium, popular and economy market segments. Its products include gin, brandy, Chinese wine, rum, vodka, tequila and whisky.

## ROUND-UP

### Globelines' Postpaid Plus

GLOBELINES HAS PUT TOGETHER ITS LANDline service and unlimited dial-up Internet connection in one package for residential subscribers.

The Globelines Postpaid Plus gives subscribers a postpaid landline and unlimited dial-up Internet for only P795 per month. The package will also enable subscribers to avail themselves of Globelines to Globelines toll-free NDD and enjoy low IDD rates when using the Globe1 card.

"We want to be able to provide for every connectivity need of the customer, suited to whatever budget he may have. That's why we continue to come up with new services and offer new packages to consumers to make sure that Globelines has just the right service bundle for them," Globelines marketing head Jose Antonio T. Mapa said.

The new Globelines Postpaid Plus was launched in early April and is now available to customers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Existing Globelines Postpaid users can upgrade to this package.

"For P795 montly, it's less than what a subscriber normally pays for a telephone line and unlimited dial-up Internet access. On top of making the best communication services available to subscribers, we also make sure that we bring them affordable rates," Mapa said.

He said this service was introduced for those requiring Internet access but were on a tight budget. Globelines Postpaid Plus is intended for customers who are heavy on calls and who need to connect to the Internet occasionally.

Globelines is a brand of Innove Communications Inc. It introduced the toll-free NDD scheme in the country. It also provides broadband Internet connection at affordable rates.

### Ayala Life profit up 77%

AYALA LIFE ASSURANCE INC. SAID IT HAD posted a net income of P387.8 Million in 2005, up 77 percent from P219.2 million in 2004.

Ayala Life president Emilio de Quiros said, "the increase is attributed to its growing bancassurance distribution channel and the astute calls made on its investment portfolio."

The first year premium income grew 16 percent mainly due to a 39-percent increase in the volume of business generated through BPI's distribution network. Group insurance business increased 7 percent, from P 310 million to P 331 million.

Ayala Plans, the pre-need company of BPI, posted its highest net income at P149.4 Million from previous year's P0.40 million.

### CB Richard Ellis' purchase

CB RICHARD ELLIS GROUP INC. AND ALFA Capital Partners (ACP) said CB Richard Ellis had acquired from ACP's investors and other shareholders a 51-percent interest in Noble Gibbons, one of Russia's leading real estate services firms. CB Richard Ellis has committed to purchasing the remaining outstanding shares of Noble Gibbons, subject to certain conditions, at a later date.

Noble Gibbons has been CB Richard Ellis' affiliate in Russia since 1995, and the transaction reflects the company's strategy of buying-in affiliate firms that are leaders in their regional markets.

Noble Gibbons has long been a leader in the rapidly growing Russian market. Founded in 1994, the firm is based in central Moscow and has 230 employees.

Noble Gibbons completed sales and leasing transactions valued at $233 million in 2005. It manages more than 2.6 million square feet of commercial real estate.

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# Perks for cement projects unnecessary, says Cemap

## Consumers say high prices in domestic market do not reflect claimed excess industry capacity

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INVESTMENT INCENTIVES FOR NEW cement projects are uncalled for as the industry's existing manufacturing capacity remains under utilized, a group of cement makers said.

Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (Cemap) said the industry's capacity utilization was placed at only 56.4 percent.

Cemap executive director Ernesto M. Ordoñez said in an interview that in 2005, the factories of all Cemap members produced 11.58 million metric tons of cement while their total capacity was 18.48 MMT.

Ordoñez said demand had been about about 11 MMT in the past 10 years.

Cemap data showed that since 1995, cement output reached a high of 14.89 MMT in 1997 and dipped to the decade's lowest in 2005.

Also, demand last year punctuated with a 6-percent decline a three-year downtrend that started from a volume of 12.73 MMT in 2002.

"Demand has been generally flat in the past 10 years and it is (illogical) to expect this to match a projection of 12-percent yearly growth based on a plan that is always being updated," Ordoñez said.

He was referring to government projections in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-1020, which showed that demand would overtake production capacity by 2010.

Government data show that excess capacity would steadily decline from 197 million bags or 7.88 MMT in 2005 to a deficit of 6 million bags or about 240,000 MT in 2010.

This projections had been the basis of government plans to again make available fiscal incentives for new cement manufacturing projects.

Cemap is against the idea as industry officials said this would only worsen the already low level of capacity utilization.

Cement buyers, including members of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations, blasted Cemap for manipulating the excess capacity issue.

Last month, Creba said pronouncements about high levels of excess capacity did not jive with record-high cement prices.

Creba had urged the government to push through with plans to encourage new players with investment incentives.

Last week, Cemap had called for additional protection of the cement industry by including cement in the list of sensitive products that would be spared from reduction of import barriers under the World Trade Organization.

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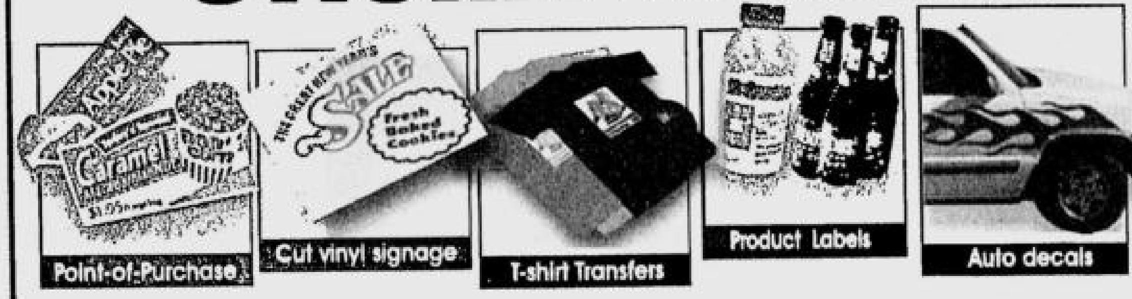

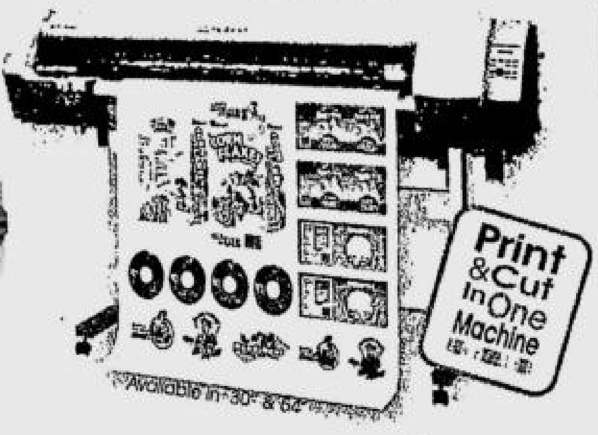

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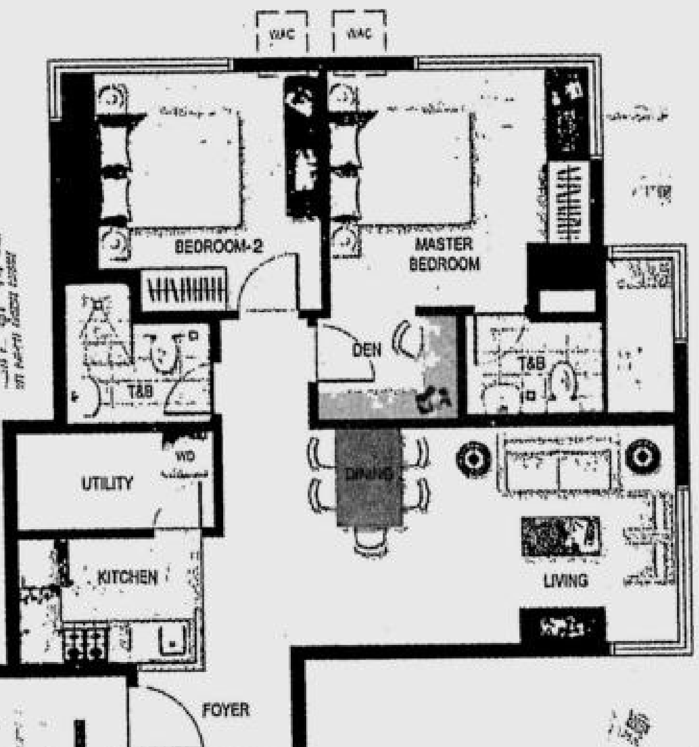

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# DTI, traders urged to put up export fund

**By Doris C. Dumlao**

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS wants the Department of Trade and Industry and the export sector to share in the cost of creating a new fund that will boost the competitive edge of the country's exporters.

But the proposed exporters fund—which according to Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri could run anywhere from P100 million to P500 million—has put the BSP in a dilemma. Some members of the BSP's Monetary Board do not relish the thought of extending financial aid to exporters.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the institution was open to the creation of a new export promotion fund, and that one way to go about it was to establish a cost-sharing scheme among the BSP, DTI and exporters.

"It's better if the private sector has a contribution to the fund," Tetangco said.

The BSP earlier extended a P10.5 million fund for the same objective, but the export sector complained the amount was too small and the eligibility requirements too stiff.

"What's being contemplated is a bigger export promotion fund where the DTI and the BSP may put up their respective shares," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

But BSP sources said at least three members of the Monetary Board did not favor the budgeting of a bigger amount for export promotion, saying it was not the monetary regulator's job to intervene in industrial matters.

In fact, some MB members were taken aback when Neri urged Tetangco to commit to an export promotion fund worth up to P500 million during a forum with exporters last week.

"It's not our mandate to promote exports," one MB member said. "Giving too much of such sector-specific assistance was among the reasons why the old Central Bank went bankrupt."

But Guinigundo said that if the BSP were to push through with its contribution to the export fund, it would still be within its mandate.

"We're not subsidizing (the sector), we're just helping stabilize (export inflows)," Guinigundo said. "When you stabilize export earnings, you are also promoting monetary and financial stability, which is the mandate of the BSP. This is still broadly consistent with the mandate of the BSP."

During a forum last week, representatives from small and medium exporters warned that unless the peso falls back to the 53:$1 level, many businesses would be forced to fold up, while others may start laying of workers.

## *Subic imposes $100 fee on import permits for used vehicles*

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**

SUBIC FREEPORT AUTHORITIES HAVE slapped a $100 fee on import permits for used vehicles since they resumed issuing the documents last October.

Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority had stopped the processing of applications for import permits from June 2004 until October 2005 as industry stakeholders awaited the ruling of the Supreme Court on whether the importation of vehicles through Subic was lawful.

Car assemblers have been complaining that the entry of used vehicles into the country through Subic has stunted the growth of the local industry.

Armand C. Arreza, SBMA Administrator and Chief Executive, said the agency generated about P11 million in revenues from the import fees in the fourth quarter of 2005.

This means that permits for a total of 2,200 units—including heavy equipment—were issued out of the available permits for 3,000 units as of October last year.

"The SBMA's tack now is to issue a number of permits based on the importers' available yard space," Arreza said. "Before that, importers have been issued more than what their yards could accommodate and what actually happened was that the permits were 'sold' (to a secondary market)."

The local assemblers' concern about used vehicle importation stemmed from the influx of cheap second-hand units through Subic.

As a result, critics have questioned in court the act of importation itself, saying even this should not be allowed as it was tantamount to smuggling.

Government officials said the intent of the law that allows used vehicles in Subic was that these would be processed for reexport.

When the SBMA resumed processing permits late last year, officials said there were at least some 600 applications pending.

SBMA records show that between 2001 and 2005, at least 90,000 cars, commercial vehicles and heavy equipment have have been shipped into the Freeport.

Last month, allied groups, which includes the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers Association of the Philippines Inc., said industry players were hopeful that a Supreme Court ruling would finally put the issue to rest.

## Petron defines need for oil tariff differential

**By Abigail L. Ho**

IN REVIVING THE oil refinery industry, the government will have to implement a tariff differential between crude and refined petroleum products, according to Petron Corp. president and chief executive Khalid Al-Faddagh.

"No doubt a tariff differential will spur new investments," Al-Faddagh said on Friday. "Since the abolition of the tariff differential, while the Philippines is short of refining capacity, nobody new has come in with new investments in the refining business.

"The region is booming in terms of putting refining capacity, so why isn't that happening here?"

### Big help

Fellow refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. last year submitted a position paper to the Department of Energy on the tariff differential issue.

Edgar Chua, Shell country chair, earlier had said that a duty differential would be a big help from the government.

Al-Faddagh said that while a tariff differential would benefit refiners such as Petron, maintaining the status quo, or having refiners and pure importers pay the same import levies, would not stop Petron from upgrading and expanding its refinery facilities.

### Different

This would be because Petron had a different business model from Shell, Al-Faddagh said.

He explained that Shell, being a multinational company and having regional capacity, would have to consider the other countries where its parent firm has a presence.

"Obviously, (Shell) would put their money in the most efficient country, in terms of tax regime or business environment," Al-Faddagh said. "So they're looking at whether or not the Philippines can compete globally with the other refining assets that they have."

### Decision

"So why would they put it somewhere that doesn't give them incentives, when other countries are giving (them those incentives)?" Al-Faddagh asked. "I think that's really how they look at it."

In Petron's case, he said its Philippine refinery was the only one it had, so all investment decisions would be made based on what would make the company more viable and able to produce higher-margin products.

Should Shell decide to shut its refinery down, however, he said it would be impossible for Petron to address the entire local fuel demand.

If that happens, he said Petron "could either expand or build."

"It's just a matter of timing and defining the stability of the market, since putting in new capacity needs a significant amount of money," Al-Faddagh said.

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Republic of the Philippines
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**
Center for Health Development – Bicol
**BICOL MEDICAL CENTER**
**BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**
Naga City
Telephone Nos. (054)473-2334 ; (054)473-89-36
E-mail Address: slopez_bmc@yahoo.com
Fax No. (054)473-89-36; (054)473-2334; (054)811-2227
Website: http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

## Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The BICOL MEDICAL CENTER, through General Appropriations Act of 2006 intends to apply specified sums for the following projects:
   a. **Project: Procurement of Various Medical and Dental Supplies – (IAEB No. 2006-03)**
   Approved Budget for the Contract. **TWENTY NINE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY EIGHT THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE Philippine Pesos (PhP 29,578,665.00)**
      Sale of Bid Documents April 17 – May 18, 2006
      Pre-Bid Conference May 18, 2006 – 9:00AM – BMC Library
      Bid Opening May 30, 2006 – 9:00AM – BMC Library
   b. **Project: Procurement of Various Radiology/Laboratory Supplies and Reagents – (IAEB No. 2006-04)**
   Approved Budget for the Contract **ELEVEN MILLION ONE HUNDRED ONE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED EIGHTY THREE Philippine Pesos (PhP 11,101,683.00)**
      Sale of Bid Documents April 17 – May 19, 2006
      Pre-Bid Conference May 19, 2006 – 9:00AM – BMC Library
      Bid Opening May 31, 2006 – 9:00AM – BMC Library
   Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.
2. The **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the above stated projects. Delivery of Goods required as stated in the Special Conditions of the Contract for each project.

   The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine his responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00A.M. to 12:00Noon; 1:00P.M. to 5:00P.M.**, except weekends and Holidays
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents for each project may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **TWO THOUSAND Philippine Pesos (PhP2,000.00)**. The method of payment will be in the form of Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must delivered to the address, date and time stated above. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms, in the amount at least equal to and not lower than a percentage of the ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.
   1. **Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)**
   2. **Bank Guarantee (1.5% of ABC)**
   3. **GSIS Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)**

   Late bids shall not be accepted.
7. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representative/s who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The **BICOL MEDICAL CENTER** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Contact Address:
**BICOL MEDICAL CENTER**
Concepcion Pequeña, Naga City
Telephone Nos. (054)473-8936/ (054)473-7578
E-mail Address slopez_bmc@yahoo.com
Fax No. (054) 473-8936; (054) 811-2227
Website http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

Contact Person:
ANGELITA A. AGAWA, MPA
Chief Administrative Officer and BAC Chairman

(Sgd.) ANGELITA A. AGAWA, MPA
BAC Chairman

(PDI – APRIL 17 & 24, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
TONDO MEDICAL CENTER
Balut, Tondo, Manila
TMC-BIDS & AWARD COMMITTEE

## INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Tondo Medical Center hereby invites sealed written bid for the procurement and delivery of Food Stuff, Medical and Various Equipment, Drugs & Medicines, Dental X-ray, Medical & Surgical Supplies, Laboratory reagents for 2nd semester Cy, 2006.

Interested applicants must submit pre-qualifications/supporting document, payment of non-refundable fee for Drugs & Medicine (1000) Dental, X-ray, Medical/Surgical, Laboratory Reagent (1,000) Food Stuff (800) Medical & Various Equipment (1,500).

For complete list please get a copy from the supply Office, Balut, Tondo, Manila.

The Schedule of Bidding Activities are as follows:

| | Issuance of bids | Pre-Bid Conference | Submission of Bids | Opening of Bids | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Drugs and Medicine | April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006 | May 15, 2006 10:00 AM | June 13, 2006 8:00 AM 10:00 AM | June 13, 2006 10:30 AM | Revolving Fund, Income, Regular Fund |
| Medical/Surgical Supplies, X-ray, Dental Supplies & Laboratory reagents | April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006 | May 16, 2006 10:00 AM | June 14, 2006 8:00 AM 10:00 AM | June 14, 2006 10:30 AM | |
| Food Stuff | April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006 | May 17, 2006 10:00 AM | June 15, 2006 8:00 AM 10:00 AM | June 15, 2006 10:30 AM | |
| Medical & Various Equipment | April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006 | May 18, 2006 10:00 AM | June 16, 2006 8:00 AM 10:00 AM | June 16, 2006 10:30 AM | |

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, Bid evaluation an award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise know as the Government Procurement Reforms Act.

All activities shall be held at Tondo Medical Center, Conference Room, Balut, Tondo, Manila unless announced otherwise.

For further details please contact Secretariat Tondo Medical Center at Tel. No. 251-8421 to 23 loc. 207.

*TONDO MEDICAL CENTER BAC, RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, TO ANNUL THE BIDDING PROCESS, REJECT ALL BIDS AT ANYTIME PRIOR TO THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT, WITHOUT THEREBY INCURRING ANY LIABILITY TO THE AFFECTED BIDDERS OR ANY OBLIGATION TO INFORM THE AFFECTED BIDDER/BIDDERS ON THE REASON FOR DOING SO. TMC-BAC ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY BIDS NOR DEEM IT GUARANTEED THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.*

(Sgd.) VICTOR J. DELA CRUZ, M.D., CESO IV
Medical Center Chief II

(PDI - April 24 & May 1, 2006)

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CEBU HOLDINGS INC.
AN AFFILIATE OF AYALA LAND, INC.

### NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of **CEBU HOLDINGS, INC.** will be held at the City Sports Club Cebu, Cebu City on **FRIDAY, 28 APRIL 2006 at 10:00 A.M.** with the following

**AGENDA**

1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Annual Report of Officers
4. New Business
   4.1 Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management adopted in the ordinary course of business during the preceding year.
5. Election of Directors (including the Independent Directors)
6. Election of Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration
7. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting
8. Adjournment

Stockholders of record as of **17 March 2006** shall be the stockholders entitled to vote at this meeting. As per By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Books of the Corporation will be closed from **17 to 24 March 2006**, inclusive.

Makati City, 02 March 2006.

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**RENATO O. MARZAN**
Corporate Secretary

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### NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of **CEBU PROPERTY VENTURES AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.** will be held at the City Sports Club Cebu, Cebu City on FRIDAY, 28 APRIL 2006 at 3:00 P.M. with the following

**AGENDA**

1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Annual Report of Officers
4. New Business
   4.1 Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management adopted in the ordinary course of business during the preceding year.
5. Election of Directors (including the Independent Directors)
6. Election of Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration
7. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting
8. Adjournment

Stockholders of record as of **21 March 2006** shall be the stockholders entitled to vote at this meeting. As per By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Books of the Corporation will be closed from **21 to 28 March 2006**, inclusive.

Makati City, 06 March 2006.

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**RENATO O. MARZAN**
Corporate Secretary

# Metrobank Foundation, MTAP, DepEd encourage young math enthusiasts

**A joint project of the Metrobank Foundation, Inc., Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines (MTAP) and the Department of Education, the Metrobank-MTAP-DepEd Math Challenge aims to improve math education and encourage young Math geniuses in the country.**

*The 2006 Math Challenge First Place Winners in the Grade 6 and 4th Year High School in both the individual and team categories together with Metrobank Foundation, DepEd and MTAP officials. From left: Dr. Beatriz G. Torno, Margaret Ty Cham, Elvira Ong-Chan, Emerson G. Escolar, Galvin Lester K. Dy, Kennard Ong Sychingping, Aldric Cristobal C. Reyes, Andrew James A. Tan Lee, Sr. Coronel, EVP/ED Sobrepeña, and Congressman Lacson, who was the guest of honor and speaker during the awarding ceremonies.*

More than three hundred thousand students from private and public elementary schools nationwide joined this year's competition. The Foundation awarded close to half a million pesos in cash prizes, plus trophies and medals to the 18 elementary and high school winners and their coaches.

For nine years, the competition has been looking for the Math "jewels" in the country. This year's competition was more intense; all national finalists were the top two scorers within their respective geographical areas. They are the best of the best – meeting the hurdle rates set by a steering committee made up of the contest partners.

The awarding ceremonies were held at the Metrobank Plaza last April 8, 2006 at the Metrobank Plaza. Congressman Jose Carlos V. Lacson, Representative of the 3rd District of Negros Occidental and Chair of the House Committee on Basic Education was the guest of honor and speaker. Also present were Executive Vice President and Executive Director Mr. Aniceto M. Sobrepeña.Sr Iluminada Coronel, President of MTAP and Dr. Beatriz G.Torno, Executive Director of the Teacher Education Council.

NATIONAL
AWARDING C

## MMC 2006 National Winners

**INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

National Capital Region – A
**1st Place**
**Andrew James A. Tan Lee**
St. Jude Catholic School

Region 4-A
**2nd Place**
**Immanuel V. Encarnacion**
Colegio San Agustin – Biñan

Region 9
**3rd Place**
**Zheng Rong W. Wu**
Zamboanga Chong Hua High School

**4th Year**

National Capital Region - A
**1st Place**
**Emerson G. Escolar**
Grace Christian High School

Region 9
**2nd Place**
**Abegail C. Ceralde**
Zamboanga Chong Hua High School

Region 10
**3rd Place**
**Carlo C. Miñon**
Xavier University High School

**TEAM CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

National Capital Region - A
**1st Place**
**Aldric Cristoval C. Reyes**
**Kennard Ong Sychingping**
Chiang Kai Shek College

National Capital Region – B
**2nd Place**
**Gisel L. Ong**
**Zixin S. Zhang**
Grace Christian High School

Region 4-A
**3rd Place**
**Immanuel V. Encarnacion**
**Neil Patrick C. Angeles**
Colegion San Agustin – Biñan

**4th Year**

National Capital Region – A
**1st Place**
**Emerson G. Escolar**
**Galvin Lester K. Dy**
Grace Christian High School

Region 6
**2nd Place**
**Jesreal L. Arcillas**
**Diosdado A. Sorsano, Jr.**
Philippine Science High School – Western Visayas

Region 10
**3rd Place**
**Carlo C. Miñon**
**Michael Daniel C. Lucagbo**
Xavier University – Cagayan de Oro

## MMC 2006 National Finalists

(Top scorer in their Geographical area; meet the cut-off score)

**INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

Region 3
**Marjorie N. Garcia**
General Isidro Torres Memorial Elementary School

Region 6
**Ma. Christina M. Jamerlan**
St. Joseph School (Iloilo) Inc.

Region 11
**Anlorenze Mae B. Conde**
Magugpo Pilot Imelda Elementary School

National Capital Region - B
**Gisel L. Ong**
Grace Christian High School

**4th Year**

Region 2
**Dennis C. Zinampan**
Cagayan National High School

Region 4-A
**Niño Ian V. Padua**
Gumaca National High School

National Capital Region - A
**Mark Jefferson M. Diaz**
Judge Juan Luna High School

**TEAM CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

Region 5
**Rojen R. Aguilar**
**Kristyl Ira S. Velasco**
Amancio Aguilar Elementary School

Region 7
**Lawrence Neal U. Garcia**
**Sed Anderson K. Holaysan**
Bethany Christian School

Region 11
**Jesmar Norleen Miljie D. Lozada**
**Davies John M. Arcena**
Rizal Elementary School

Region 12
**Hannah Mae Xyza C. Montañer**
**Althea S. Lauban**
Albert Einstein School

**4th Year**

Region 2
**Renz Ar G. Deray**
**Madonna N. Nilo**
Regional Science High School

Region 3
**Rich Kayle Villanueva**
**Van Shaider E. Pagaduan**
Olongapo City National High School

Region 11
**Dareen A. Ramos**
**Rae Recy B. Bagonoc**
Philippine Science High School – Southern Mindanao

National Capital Region - A
**Jan Michael S. Padilla**
**Ma. Rogelyn A. Nicolas**
Torres High School

## MMC 2006 Regional Winners

**INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

Aissa Mei S. Chua
Michelle B. Tumamao
Hyacinth Elaine A. Zamora
Catherine Joy B. Asido
Marie Camille S. Habacon
Jan Aureo B. Bihag
Jan Michael Carigaba
Mariz A. Piedad
Jefferson Dave Guimpayan
Mary Trisha G. Iglesia
Florianne Marie T. Castillo
Fred Nyll Tupas
Celeste Atas
Zheng Rong W. Wu
Shar Mae P. Gayangos
Clint Drexel M. Ongue
Jan Philippe B. Sambo
Jeremie R. Plaza
Dione Lou J. Cadavos
Karlo Nicholas T. Soriano
Eloise Jiannina D. Guadaña

**4th Year**

Joseph M. Caburnay
Allan Ray Tanchiatco
Denryl Cnosar S. Cortuna
Riza Milante
Carmeglo C. Saliba
Kyna Elyse Cheu
Kimberly C. Yap
Rean Mikel Corpuz
Ingrid B. Escabal
Christopher Emmanuel D. Dollente

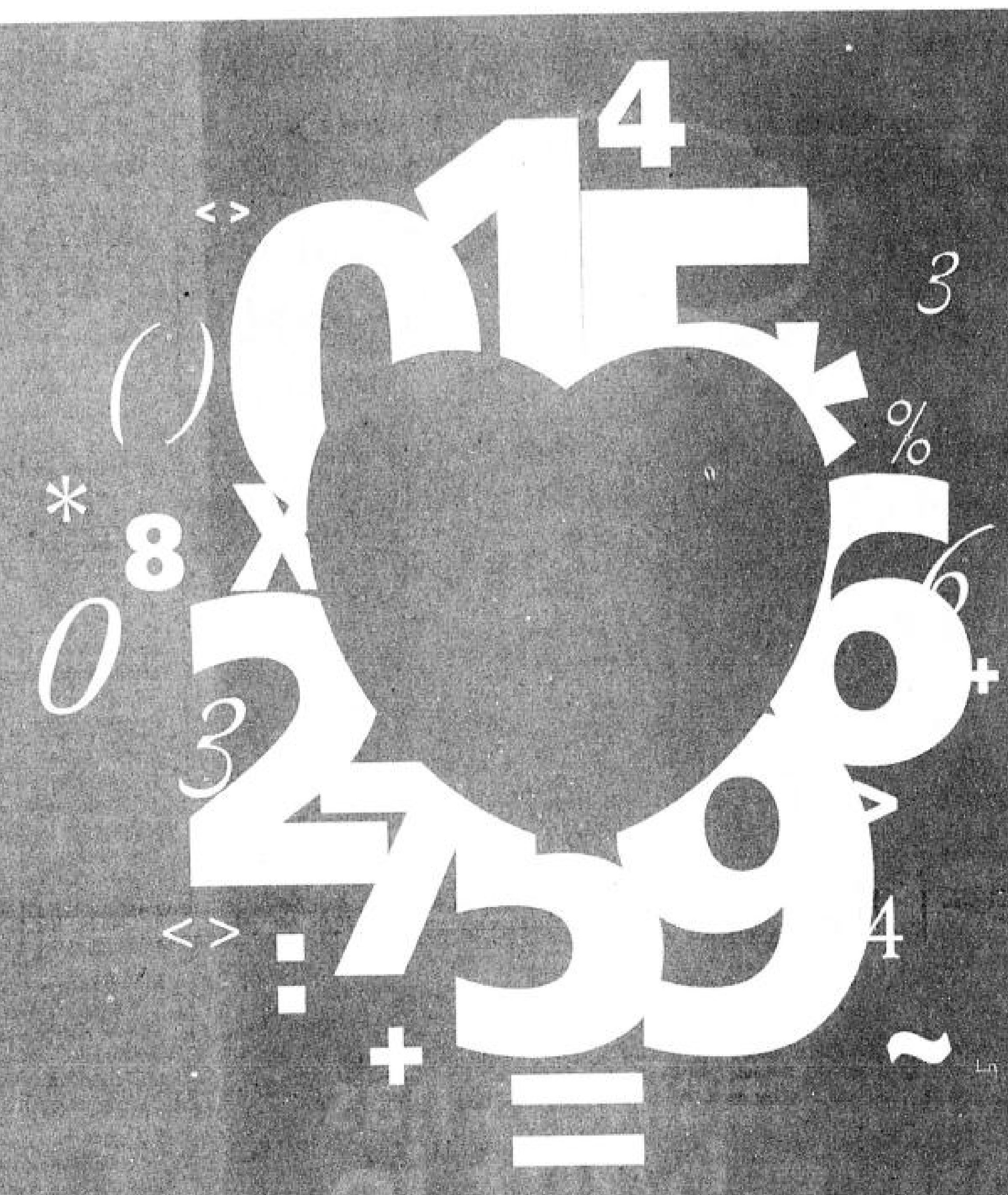
**TEAM CATEGORY**

**Grade 6**

Mikhael Anjelu B. Magana
Johnly Febdane T. Madamba
Michelle B. Tumamao
Gil Anthony D. Tan
Kathryn Gale S. Quiwa
Ginarey Grace Ann S. Guidn

**4th Year**

Rowel Callanta
Art Ephraim Abalos
Racholl C. Araja
Leozar D. Herrera
Ginalyn V. Vega
Mark Angelo C. Purio
Carlos Borromeo
John Daniel Vasquez
Kyna Elyse Cheu
Christian Bernard Dy
Abegail C. Ceralde
Jhay Ralph A. Alaban
Stephen W. Chiong
Thaddeus Martin Z. Uy
Reyden G. Cabargada
Lanie Rea Q. Sulapas
Mart Angelo C. Selmo
Christopher Emmamiel D. Dollento



## confession of a math lover

"My love for mathematics has instilled in me many values that helped me in my quest to excel. I realized that living life, just like solving mathematical problems, has many hurdles and setbacks. But all these can be overcome if one is determined to find the best solution no matter what it takes. Math has been my passion since I was a child. Being the National Winner during my senior year in high school beautifully highlighted my decade long participation in elementary and high school math competitions – years when I encountered not mere competitors but new-found friends who were all math enthusiasts like me."

**Deogracias "Gary" P. Villame**
2003 MMC 4th Year Individual Champion

University of the Philippines
3rd yr. BS Electronics and Communications Engineering
Magna Cum Laude Standing
2006 UP Outstanding Athlete (Men's Football)

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E-mail: pr_info_tech@inquirer.com.ph

INFOTECH

Editor Leo Magno

**Text us your feedback:** Inquirer It name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

# Intel slowly building digital home networks

*(Last of two parts)*

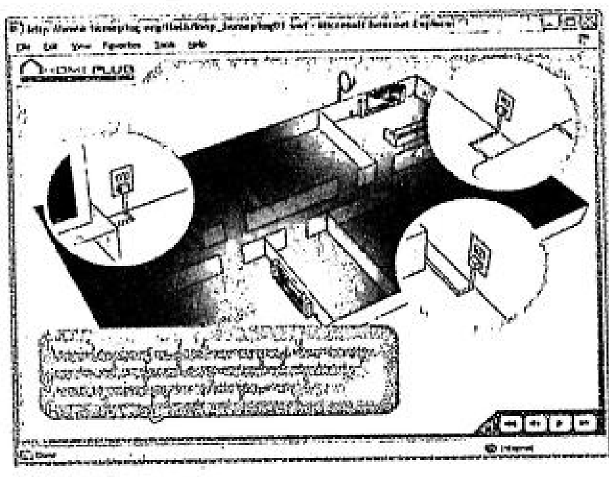
THE HOMEPLUG POWERLINE ALLIANCE, founded in March 2000, is backed by industry giants such as Intel, Sony, Samsung, Motorola and GE. A standard for distributing data across electrical wiring is now being developed. Others have successfully used the powerline to route data, but proprietary protocols were used so appliances and devices could not effectively communicate using the earlier methods.

This development becomes significant as the lines between the computing, communications and entertainment markets continue to blur. HomePlug is now nearing the end of the specification process. Today, HomePlug networking is the only globally recognized standard for high-speed powerline networking with millions of products in use on six continents.

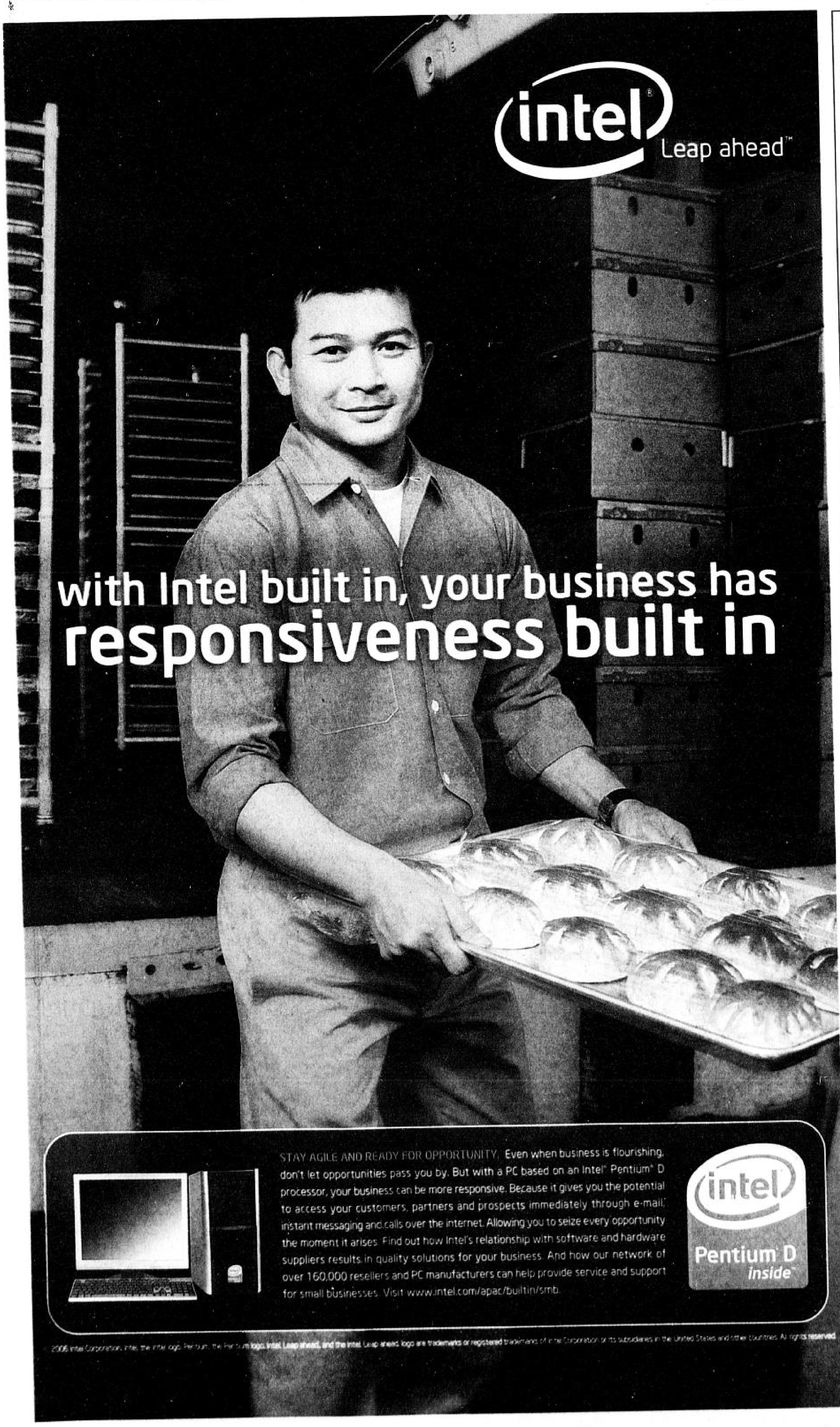
This is where ViiV comes in. As Intel pushes its digital home entertainment platform, it hopes to get more OEMs to manufacture products according to the ViiV specification. And with HomePlug, these ViiV-enabled appliances could easily be connected through the electrical wiring network.

The entry of Intel into the consumer electronics market will surely be watched by companies like Sony and Samsung, which are already in a very competitive struggle for market dominance. Enter Intel with its eyes trained on the same market which is increasingly becoming crowded. What happens then when TV manufacturers begin shipping products with ViiV-like capabilities?

"Then I would be very happy," said McDonald. "ViiV is based on open standards and we would encourage consumer electronics suppliers to consider the platform and incorporate ViiV into their products."



**USING the electrical wiring in homes, HomePlug adapters plugged into electrical outlets become broadband access points.**



STAY AGILE AND READY FOR OPPORTUNITY. Even when business is flourishing, don't let opportunities pass you by. But with a PC based on an Intel® Pentium® D processor, your business can be more responsive. Because it gives you the potential to access your customers, partners and prospects immediately through e-mail, instant messaging and calls over the internet. Allowing you to seize every opportunity the moment it arises. Find out how Intel's relationship with software and hardware suppliers results in quality solutions for your business. And how our network of over 160,000 resellers and PC manufacturers can help provide service and support for small businesses. Visit www.intel.com/apac/builtin/smb.

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intel

## SMBs GUIDE TO BUYING PCS

Whether buying your first PC or creating a network, your computer should be tailored to your company's needs. Below are the top 10 things to consider when purchasing PCs.

*1. Why do you need this computer?*
Knowing how the PC will be used is a good way to determine the right PC for your business.

*2. Beware of refurbished computers*
Although upgrading components to extend your computer's life may superficially cost less than a ready-made computer, it can be less reliable and may cost more in the long run.

*3. Laptop or Desktop?*
If your employees constantly need access to company data on the go, laptops are the best solution. With wireless technology like Intel® Centrino® Duo, your employees can connect to the Internet in most international airports and cafés.

*4. Software-- where to start?*
Windows*, Macintosh OS*, and Linux* all have their strengths. Use what you are comfortable with, and what you need to accomplish your most important tasks.

*5. Extras?*
If you plan on running professional programs or have some very specialized tasks, you may need to add extra components to your computer, such as a video card with graphics accelerator, digital cameras, web cams, etc.

*6. Don't Skimp on Security!*
You cannot afford to risk your business's data. Make sure your computer is powerful enough to run anti-virus software while not disrupting other programs.

*7. Memory*
For basic applications, you should have at least 256 Megabytes (MB) of RAM while you should have a minimum of 512MB for graphics programs. Basic word processing requires a hard drive that is 40Gigabytes (GB) but if you are dealing with a lot of images, music, or other large files, you should invest in at least 80GB.

*8. Power*
Again, consider how the computer will be used. If you often use compute intensive programs or do a lot of multitasking, then invest in the Intel® Pentium® D processor supporting Hyper-Threading Technology for desktop PCs. Meanwhile, the Intel® Centrino® Duo is the best bet for notebooks.

*9. Cheaper isn't always better*
Your computer is an investment that should provide three years of optimal performance for a desktop PC and two years for a notebook. It should also provide headroom and flexibility for new software or more demanding usage patterns over time. IT should be a long-term relationship, so select a company and brand you can trust.

*10. Don't be dazed by sales lingo*
Knowing a few essential PC terms will help you navigate through a sales pitch. Get to know what you need in a PC before going to the store and buying one.

###

*Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.

Hyper-Threading Technology requires a computer system with an Intel® Pentium® D processor supporting HT Technology and a HT Technology enabled chipset, BIOS and operating system. Performance will vary depending on the specific hardware and software you use. See www.intel.com/info/hyperthreading for more information including details on which processors support HT Technology.

http://www.pcworld.com/howto/bguide/0,guid,14,page,2,00.asp

ADVT

Republic of the Philippines
**FOOD TERMINAL, INCORPORATED**
East Service Road, Taguig City

*"Right Solution for a Business Location"*

## INVITATION FOR LEASE PROPOSALS

The management of **FOOD TERMINAL, INCORPORATED** is accepting proposals for the lease of the following buildings / office spaces within the FTI complex, strategically located near the SLEX and the airport and ideal for commercial / industrial operations:

| | Building | Area (m²) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Lot 53 | 5,839.00 |
| 2. | Lot 73-A | 3,600.00 |
| 3. | Lot 83 | 2,602.00 |
| 4. | Lot 39-C2 | 848.45 |
| | 2nd Floor | 160.00 |
| 5. | DBP Avenue Bay – 1 | 85.00 |
| 6. | Lot 52 (front) | 399.00 |
| 7. | Lot 64-D | 412.00 |
| 8. | Lot 71-C1 | 450.00 |
| 9. | Lot 64-A | 300.00 |
| | 2nd Floor | 1,080.00 |
| 10. | Lot 23-B | 621 |
| 11. | Old Administration | 157.51 |
| | 2nd Floor | 1,488.00 |
| | 3rd Floor | 2,072.00 |
| | 4th Floor | 609.00 |

Interested parties may obtain additional information by calling Ms. Rosalinda P. Lopez, Senior Manager, **MEMD at 838-3177.**

*FTI – BAC Chairman*

(PDI – APRIL 17, 24, May 1 & 8, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
**FOOD TERMINAL, INCORPORATED**
East Service Road, Taguig City

*"Right Solution for a Business Location"*

## INVITATION FOR LEASE PROPOSALS

The management of **FOOD TERMINAL, INCORPORATED** is accepting proposals for the lease of the following open / vacant lots within the FTI complex, strategically located near the SLEX and the airport and ideal for commercial / industrial operations:

| | Open / Vacant Lots | Area (m²) |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Lot 94-A | 4,783.00 |
| 2. | Lot 83 A & B | 3,773.00 |
| 3. | Lot 24 | 2,935.00 |
| 4. | Lot 37-B | 2,000.00 |
| 5. | Lot 93-B3 | 1,533.00 |
| 6. | Lot 61-A | 1,500.00 |
| 7. | Portion Lot 25 | 1,116.00 |
| 8. | Lot 21 | 1,000.00 |
| 9. | Lot 36 | 866.00 |
| 10. | Lot 12 | 800.00 |
| 11. | Lot 26 | 433.48 |
| 12. | Portion Lot 72 | 350.00 |
| 13. | Lot 71-B | 318.00 |
| 14. | Lot 39-A | 169.36 |

Interested parties may obtain additional information by calling Ms. Rosalinda P. Lopez Senior, Manager, **MEMD at 838-3177.**

*FTI – BAC Chairman*

(PDI – APRIL 17, 24; May 1 & 8, 2006)

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## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that **ERNESTO K. SERVANDO JR.**, whose picture appears above is no longer connected in any way with **COLOURWIDE COMPANY INC.** with office address at 1901 Prestige Tower Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Any transaction henceforth entered into by him for and in behalf of the company will not be honored.

(PDI - April 24, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
**BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE**

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT LETTER OF INTENT

The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) is hereby inviting prospective bidders to submit their Letter of Intent to Finance, Design, and Construct the planned 7.5-km EDSA North Transit (ENT) Project from North Avenue to NorthRail Caloocan Station through the Solicited Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) Scheme. The project will be implemented immediately after NEDA ICC approval.

The proposed bidding shall be governed by the BOT Law (RA 7718) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Submission of Letter of Intent shall be not later than 2 May 2006 addressed to The Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee, DOTC at Unit 61, 6th Floor, The Columbia Tower, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila.

**(Sgd.) ROBERT R. CASTAÑARES**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–April 10, 17 & 24, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
**REGIONAL TRIAL COURT**
6th Judicial Region
BRANCH 3
Kalibo, Aklan

IN RE: PETITION FOR DECLARATION OF PRESUMPTIVE DEATH OF THE ABSENTEE VALENTINO TORRES ELCANO FOR PURPOSES OF REMARRIAGE PURSUANT TO ART. 41 OF THE FAMILY CODE

CIVIL CASE NO. 7715

JOELINA TEJADA-ELCANO,
Petitioner.
x--------------------x

### ORDER

A verified petition was filed before this Court by petitioner, through counsel, alleging: That she was married to Valentino Torres Elcano on September 20, 1994; that after their marriage, petitioner's husband abandoned her and their children in March 1996 and never returned up to the present, that she has not received any news or information of his whereabouts or whether or not he is still alive; that petitioner and her children looked for and exerted diligent and reasonable efforts in searching for the whereabouts of Valentino Torres Elcano; that petitioner has a well-founded belief that her husband is already dead, and that petitioner desires to start a new life and hopes to remarry and for this reason, she has filed the instant petition pursuant to the second paragraph of Article 41 of the Family Code of the Philippines.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the same is hereby set for initial hearing on MAY 16, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. at the Session Hall of this Court, Branch 3, Kalibo, Aklan.

Let a copy of this Order be published before the hearing, at the expense of the petitioner, once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a widely-read newspaper of general circulation, in order that all persons interested in the above-entitled case may appear before this Court at the place and on the date and hour set herein and show cause, if any, why this petition should not be granted.

SO ORDERED.

Kalibo, Aklan, Philippines
March 20, 2006.

(Sgd.) SHEILA MARTELINO-CORTES
Regional Trial Judge

(PDI - April 10, 17 & 24, 2006)

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**NOTICE OF LOSS**

Notice is hereby given of the loss of the following stock certificates in the name of the following companies as listed herein:

ISSUING COMPANY: AYALA CORP.
Registered name: Tibayan Management Group International Holdings Co. Ltd., (25276) – 15,000 shares; (33953) – 3,000 shares; (37008) – 5,000 shares;
ISSUING COMPANY: AYALA LAND INC.
Registered Name: TMG International Holdings Co. Ltd. (37950) – 5,000 shares.
ISSUING COMPANY: GLOBE TELECOM
Registered Name – TMG International Holdings Co. Ltd. (2815) – 20 shares; (13935) – 5 shares.
ISSUING COMPANY: BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS: Registered Name: Tibayan Management Group – (181781) – 1,000 shares; (197946) – 250 shares; (229579) – 250 shares; (243863) – 300 shares; TMG International Company Ltd. – (182615) – 2,000 shares; (201075) – 500 shares; (201376) – 1,000 shares; (221033) – 700 shares. If no contest received, new certificate will be issued.

(PDI – April 17, 24 & May 1, 2006)

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NEW PHILSSA OFFICERS. Atty. Romero Quimbo, receives the Philippine Social Security Association (PHILSSA) flag and gavel as the incoming President of the Executive Board, from Elmor Juridico, PHILSSA Board Vice Chairman and Executive Director, Employees Compensation Commission in simple turnover ceremonies. From right: Florentino Espana, incoming Board Secretary-General and Vice-President, Management Services Group, Pag-IBIG Fund, Atty. Quimbo, Executive Director Juridico and Octavio Esguerra, outgoing Secretary-General and Senior Vice President, Philippine Health Insurance Corp.

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# Urban, rural growth areas step up employment

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE) today said that major urban and rural industrial areas of the country like the CALABARZON (Region 4-A), Metro Cebu and Central Visayas (Region 7), and Metro Manila posted employment gains reinforcing the bright growth prospects of the Philippine economy in 2006.

A report reaching Acting Labor and Employment Secretary Danilo P. Cruz indicated that employment-wise, CALABARZON (which stands collectively for the five provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) was the highest gainer among the country's 16 regions, posting a total employment growth of 163,000 to 3.897 million in January 2006 from 3.734 million in January 2005.

The January 2006 round of the labor force survey conducted by the National Statistics Office likewise showed that in Central Visayas, employment increased by 85,000 to 2.358 million from 2.273 million, and in Metro Manila, by 48,000 to 4.105 million in January 2006 from 4.057 million in January 2005.

Meanwhile, SOCCSKSARGEN (Region 12) in Mindanao registered an employment increment of 102,000 to 1.497 million from 1.395 million, followed by the Davao area (Region 11) with 81,000 to 1.659 million from 1.578 million.

Other regions that posted positive employment increments in January 2006 are as follows:

Cordillera Administrative Region (by 31,000 to 629,000 from 598,000); Region 1 (by 44,000 to 1.655 million from 1.611 million); Region 2 (by 70,000 to 1.321 million from 1.251 million); and,

Region 4-B (by 32,000 to 985,000 from 953,000); Region 9 (by 65,000 to 1.259 million from 1.194 million); Region 10 (by 7,000 to 1.767 million from 1.760 million); and the Caraga Region (by 60,000 to 962,000 from 902,000).

Earlier, the DOLE noted the growth of employment in most of the Philippine economy, particularly in more than 10 sectors and industries nationwide in January 2006, as follows: Electricity, gas and water (by 5,000); wholesale and retail trade (85,000); hotels and restaurants (30,000); transport, storage and communications (21,000); financial intermediation (37,000); real estate, renting and business activities (44,000); and, Public administration and defense, compulsory social security (7,000); education (58,000); other community, social and personal service activities (18,000); private households with employed persons (102,000); and agriculture, fishery and forestry (475,000).

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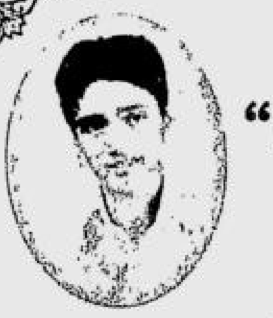
## OBITUARIES



# JOSE EDUARDO "NED" ZUMEL LOPEZ

*was called home to the Lord*
*on April 20, 2006 at the age of 44.*

His parents **Ciriaco, Jr. (Akong)** (†) and **Maria Luisa (Nena)**; his brothers, sisters, and in-laws, **Ricky** (†) and **Emmie, Marissa** (†), **Buddy** (†), **Didi** and **Loy**, **Winnie** and **Aning**, **Tito** and **Geegee**, **Terry** and **Archie**; his nephews, nieces, grandnephews, uncles, aunts, cousins, and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains will lie in state in Chapel B of Christ the King Church, Green Meadows Avenue, Libis, Quezon City until 11:00 p.m. tomorrow, April 25, 2006.

---

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"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

# BUSINESS

## High spending draws investors' concerns

### Gov't policy to settle debts in Q1 threatens to breach budget deficit target for '06

**By Michelle V. Remo**

THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF spending the bulk of its programmed expenditure for 2006 in the earlier months of the year has drawn the concern of investors and analysts, who said that the fiscal strategy threatens to breach the budget-deficit target for the full year.

Investment banks noted that in 2002, the government had hit its full-year deficit target as early as July. The government then had a hard time restricting spending in the latter months of the year, according to a ranking finance official.

The official said that the Department of Finance has already received queries from several banks on whether the government's policy was prudent.

Earlier, the administration's economic managers saw the need to pump-prime the economy. They said that the fiscal program for 2006 was designed in such a way that most of the spending, especially for infrastructure, would be done in the first half of the year, to coincide with the dry season.

They likewise agreed that spending limits starting this year should be maximized.

Under the fiscal program for 2006, the government is allowed to post a budget deficit of P71.8 billion in the first quarter alone, P18.6 billion in the second, P31.6 billion in the third and only P2.9 billion in the fourth to stay within the P125-billion deficit ceiling set for the full year.

In the first quarter, the government's budget deficit actually hit P67.6 billion, accounting for 54 percent of the deficit program for the whole of 2006.

The first-quarter deficit was, however, still lower than the P71.8-billion programmed deficit for the period.

The new fiscal policy forced some investors to question whether the government could keep to its 2006 target without going over the P125-billion budget deficit ceiling, the official said.

But National Treasurer Omar Cruz has shrugged off concerns that the new fiscal policy threatens the government's fiscal goals.

Cruz said the government remained committed to meeting the target of reducing the deficit to P125 billion this year, and wiping it out by 2008. But he stressed that this would be accomplished not through tight spending but through increasing revenue collection.

The government's intention to maximize and front-load spending this year is a turnaround from the belt-tightening policy of last year, when the government hit a budget deficit much lower than programmed mainly through expenditure cuts.

While the government set a deficit ceiling of P180 billion for last year, it recorded a budget gap of only P146.8 billion at the end of 2005—P33.2 billion lower than programmed.

Following last year's cautious spending and the increase in revenue collection, the government has decided to put a premium on pump-priming the economy this year, Cruz said.

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## Gov't agency regulates use of high-tech radio tags

**By Daxim L. Lucas**

RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION (RFID) tags may soon gain wider acceptance among businesses in the country after telecommunications regulators circulated draft rules governing their use last week.

Under the proposed guidelines, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) assigned three frequency bands within which RFID tags and readers may be used, helping set order to a technology that is already being used locally but is, thus far, unregulated.

According to the NTC, RFID systems are "intended to carry data in suitable transponders, generally known as tags, and to retrieve data, by hand- or machine-readable means, at a suitable time and place to satisfy particular application needs."

Data within a tag may provide identification of an item in manufacture, goods in transit, a location, the identity of persons or their belongings, a vehicle or assets, an animal, or other types of information, the proposed circular explained.

RFID systems employ tiny chips and wireless antennas that can be imbedded into products and used for unique identification purposes.

Popular RFID devices currently being used locally are radio tags and barriers used in stores to prevent shoplifting, as well as so-called e-Pass devices attached to cars that use the South Super Highway toll system.

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BUSINESS Monday

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

# Giving credit where credit is due

## Lack of skills, know-how, location, hinder entrepreneurship in rural areas

**By Salvador I. Sibayan**
*Contributor; UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries*

RICE, CORN, COCONUTS AND MANY other crops grow in the agrarian reform communities (ARCs). In the presence of sun, soil and water, everything grows except, alas, entrepreneurship.

There are several reasons entrepreneurial seeds remain dormant in many rural areas.

The people there lack the business skills to expand their operations. They lack basic knowledge in marketing. Worse, they live in remote, far-flung areas.

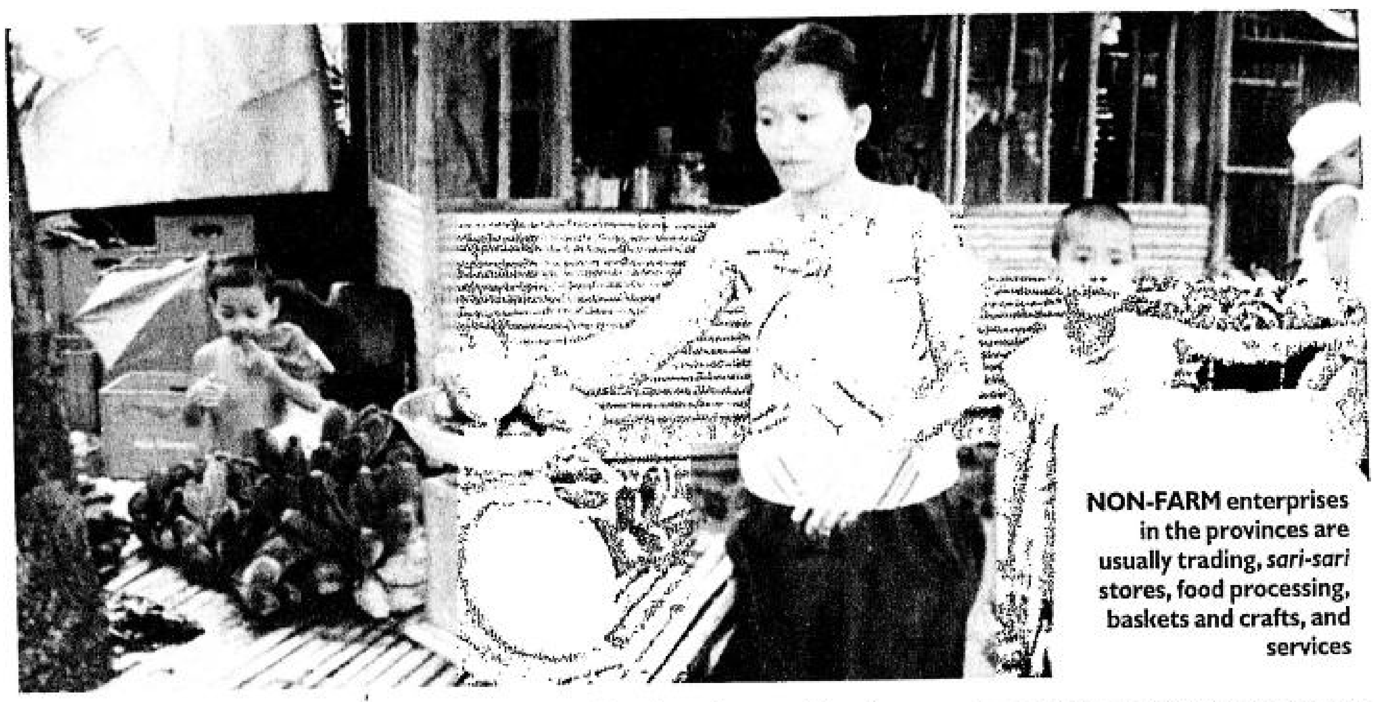
Rather than treating these as constraints, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), through the Philippine-Australia Technical Support for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (PATSARRD) Program, looked at them as problems that could be overcome.

To break the problem of dormancy, the DAR project team introduced microfinance services to the ARC residents and local government officials.

### The area

One such place was Barangay Nabaoy in Aklan. There were few economic opportunities in the area. Only 56 of the 173 households in the barangay were found to be engaged in non-farm enterprises. They were in trading, mostly *sari-sari* stores, food processing, baskets and crafts, and services. Whatever the nature of the enterprise, expansion was hampered by the lack of capital and entrepreneurial skills of prospective borrowers.

Accessing credit continued to be a limiting factor. The existing cooperative in the area, with its meager capital build-up resource, could hardly meet the credit requirements of its members. Other than the cooperative, there were no formal financing institutions in the area.



**NON-FARM** enterprises in the provinces are usually trading, *sari-sari* stores, food processing, baskets and crafts, and services

Residents confirmed that lack of capital prevented them from following proper fertilizer application, pest control measures, and other prescribed farm management practices. They were dependent on the landowners and usurers to finance their production expenses. In return, the farmers had to repay what they had borrowed in kind.

With the prevailing practice of the landowners getting two-thirds of the net produce, the farmers were left with very little and usually ended up being indebted to the landowners and the informal moneylenders.

Prior to the introduction of micro-credit, the barangay had never availed of any form of credit assistance either from the LGU, the national government or formal financing institutions for farm and non-farm activities.

Typically, micro-credit requires no collateral, focuses on business, not personal or family needs, involves an initial loan of P3,000 to P5,000 on the average which can progressively increase depending on repayment performance on the previous loan, is usually paid in weekly installments, and requires mandatory savings.

To sell the idea of micro-credit, the necessary spadework had to be done. This involved Taytay sa Kauswagan Inc. (TSKI) a microfinance institution, and DAR-PATSARRD jointly formulating an action plan. This was followed by TSKI orienting those who were pre-selected by the DAR-PATSARRD on microfinance.

A month later, TSKI followed this up with 16 hours of accreditation training spread over eight days. At the end, TSKI asked the participants to take a group recognition test to determine their eligibility to avail of credit.

### The loans

An initial loan of P50,000 was released to 15 qualified borrowers, mostly for sari-sari stores, food vending, or rice trading. By the end of 2004, TSKI managed to collect all the amounts due for a 100-percent repayment rate.

This was followed by another loan that was almost double the first. This time, the loans were for multiple purposes, i.e. working capital for sari-sari store plus livestock or poultry raising—or food vending with livestock raising. Again, the amount was fully paid with a 100 percent repayment rate.

The loan applications for the third cycle are in progress. The number of qualified borrowers has increased to 20. The loans approved for release have reached a total of P150,000, but may reach a total of P300,000, with most of the borrowers from the second cycle availing of individual loans ranging from P8,000 to P10,000.

### How much did effort cost?

For TSKI, operating costs to service the credit program consist of administrative and organizing costs. These are estimated at 9 percent of the loan plus a service charge of P320 for each borrower, each time one applies for a loan. The operating costs are used to cover the expenses of one TSKI officer who makes 24 weekly visits to the area from the time the loans are released until these are fully paid.

For the DAR, operating costs consist of organizing (P200 per borrower), which is incurred during the conduct of microfinance orientation, and the introduction of alternative income opportunities at the rate of P100 per borrower. Although the DAR does not expect to recover this, spending the amount enabled the seemingly "unbankable" to borrow.

As for the borrowers, they are charged 16 percent per annum on what they borrow. Along with their weekly loan payments, they have to save at the rate of P40 a week. This is deposited in their interest bearing accounts. Aside from the service charge of P320, they contribute a nominal amount of P3 to P4 to a training fund.

### Increase in income

According to most borrowers, access to credit was a factor to improving their

GIVING/ B2

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## *Homegrown mobile messaging provider gets global certification*

RP-BASED CHIKKA IS THE first CMMI Level 5 organization in mobile messaging space.

Chikka Asia Inc., creators of the popular Internet to mobile text messaging application Chikka Messenger, announced that it has received Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) Level 5 certification from Carnegie Mellon's Software Engineering Institute (SEI).

Maturity Level 5 is the highest standard of quality in the information technology industry.

CMMI is the internationally recognized quality certification that organizations such as Intel and Nasa compare their own processes to. This model was born in the federally funded Software Engineering Institute (SEI) established at the Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Chikka Asia's assessment for CMMI Level 5 was conducted by SEI-authorized ECC International, who also confirmed that Chikka is the first applications developer in the mobile messaging applications development space worldwide to get the CMMI Level 5 certification.

"The Level 5 certification is more than anything else an assurance for ourselves, that we are able to sustain both the frenetic pace of our product innovation and our rapid expansion. While products like Chikka Messenger are universal in terms of their utility, they are constantly adapted to different market conditions," said Chito Bustamante, Chikka chief operating officer.

The company stepped up its international rollout beginning 2005 and now has products live via the networks of telecommunications companies in the US, China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Singapore. Several Latin American carriers are also now testing connectivity to Chikka.

Currently present in 11 countries with services live over 30 international telco carriers, Chikka is the Philippines' leading "exporter" of mobile messaging-based applications.

The company's flagship service Chikka Messenger has close to 30 million users.

## Giving credit ...

From page B1

families' cash flows. Around a third of the increase in household income was attributed to better business operations. Now they have more food on the table and have more money to send their kids to school.

They also benefit from mortuary insurance which provides burial benefits to them and their immediate family members up to P20,000. For the original borrowers, their forced savings amounted to almost P31,700 after the second loan cycle. This is only about P2,000 per individual, but then they had no savings to speak of a year ago.

As entrepreneurship takes root in their midst, Ma. Rosamund Parado of PATSAR-RD couldn't help but notice that the borrowers were mostly women—out to prove that they could save and pay the true cost of credit without any special consideration.

## The first obligation of corporate social responsibility

### MAPping THE FUTURE

Vicente T. Villegas

NO SELF-RESPECTING CEO NOWADAYS will publicly proclaim that he is in business primarily for profit. For, among other reasons, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become more than a buzzword. It is a reality in business circles, even as a campaign goes on to expand the effort to bring other business groups to the fold, including small and medium scale enterprises.

Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) has more than 200 corporate members. The Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development (BBC) also has more than 200 individual members. The League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) has a roster of more than 60 corporate foundations and it continues to recruit.

Gawad Kalinga (GK) is actively supported by 300 major corporations and the number is rising. Meanwhile, the CSR committee of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) is busy at work on its own program.

**Economic and Social Convergence:** CSR means many things to many people. It is widely practiced on at least two levels—giving and doing—but, like in most exciting undertakings, it is important to go back to basics.

The word corporate makes the concept by practical definition a business or economic activity. By the same token, it is also by practical definition a social activity.

In other words, this is where economic and social activity converges, and it is critical for us business people to understand the basics of this convergence.

**The Role of Profit:** It would be helpful from the start to dispose of one issue. Profit is an essential element of business. Without profit, i.e., sustainable long-term profitability, there is no business and, consequently, no peg on which to hang corporate social responsibility.

**The Purpose of Business:** Profit-making is also fun and enjoyable but, even though it is a strategic business objective, it is not the purpose of business. Business has a nobler purpose. Quite subconsciously in most cases, top executives actually "feel and live" that nobler purpose of business every day.

It is not profit that makes them go to work, but the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment at the end of each day.

This "sense" addresses the very basic need of their human nature, which is the subject of human development. In other words, the more they work, the more satisfied and accomplished they feel, the more human they become.

All the people who work with top executives, from middle managers all the way down to the production line, sales units, etc., have the same very basic need to be satisfied and accomplished and to become more human, although obviously in different ways and different degrees.

The business as a community of persons organized to achieve a common goal must provide the opportunity and environment for everyone in the firm to fulfill his very basic human needs, each according to his ability to contribute.

**A Management Challenge:** It is a tall order and requires a lot of executive smarts. It is a management challenge, not a labor productivity issue. Few would have trouble accepting the notion that, in addition to making a profit, business must render important service to society.

That conveniently takes care of the most important stakeholders, usually the stockholders and the customers and, in this age of corporate social responsibility, that includes the community and, of course, the poor wherever they may be.

But how about the workers in the firm? Typically they are praised and their value extolled in the last paragraph of the corporate annual report.

The first obligation of corporate social responsibility is to the employees in the firm, from the top to the very bottom.

Thus, the right formula is: More than just an economic activity, business is a social vocation whose fundamental purpose is to fulfill the basic human needs of the people working in it and to advance the well-being of society at large through the enabling power of its profitability.

A business must look inward before it looks outward.

As articulated in "Profit and More," an article in the Journal of Business Ethics, the generation of work for people is not just a byproduct of the logistical needs of the business, but actually a key reason why the business exists in the first place.

Human labor is not solely meant to serve an economic purpose—it is not just one of the many commodities that generate cost and can be subject to routine substitution of labor-saving devices and outsourced materials.

It has primacy over inanimate instruments of business. Technology is for the service of man and is not meant to replace him.

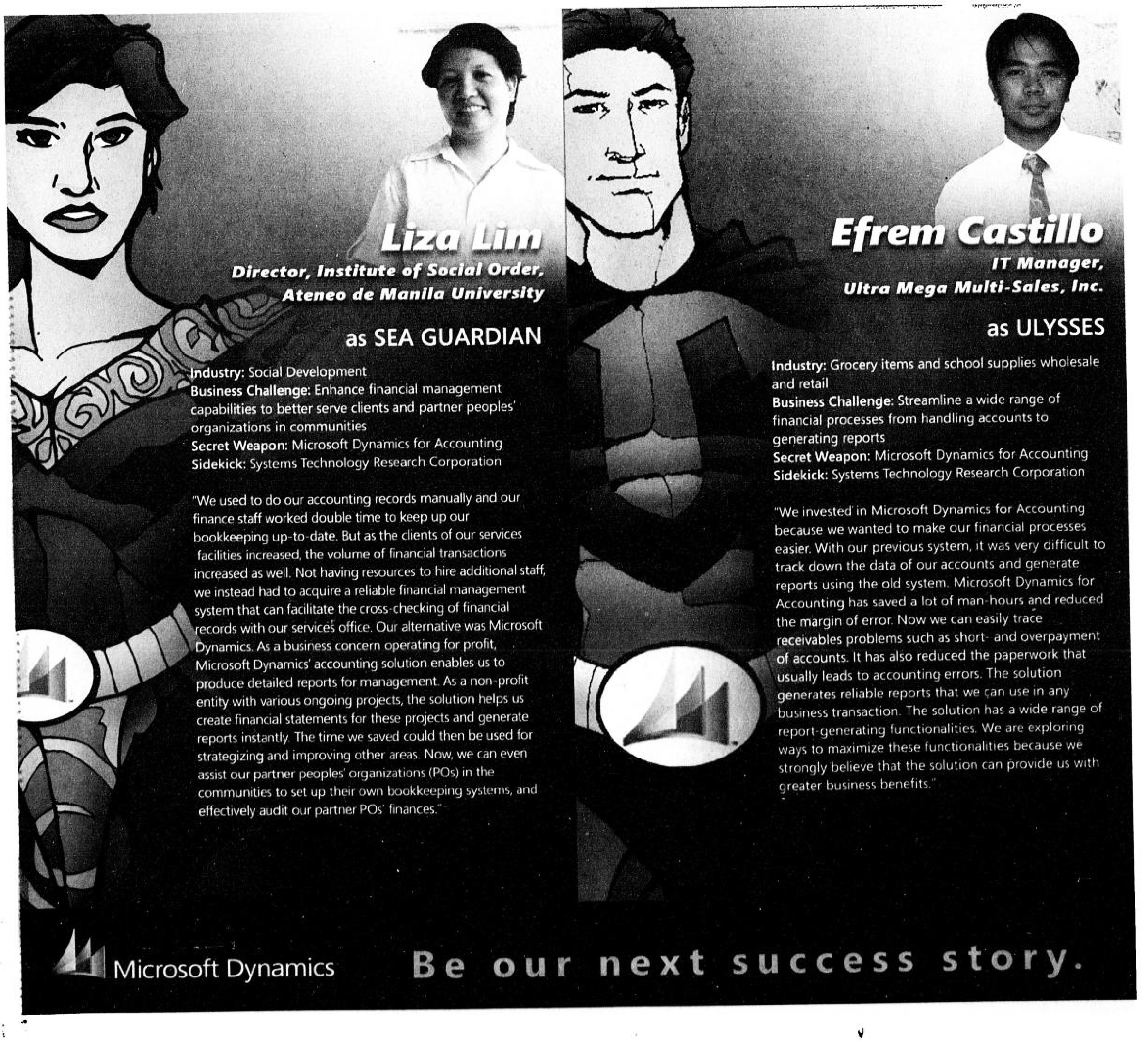
Enlightened companies create conditions in the organization that foster growth and flourishing of employees with such initiatives as designing self-fulfilling jobs and work flow; promoting participative management and actually sharing ownership of the firm; making sure that when layoff is unavoidable, displaced workers are justly compensated and relocated; developing family friendly policies, paying just wages and fringe benefits and respecting the rights of unions to negotiate, etc.

**Importance of Public Assertion:** In typical situations, the problem is not that employees are not given priority attention, but rather, it is presumed that they are. Therefore, to be socially responsible, the firm then devotes its energy and public relations resources to outside causes.

Furthermore, because of the existence of militant labor unions who are as much confused as some executives are as to their economic and social responsibility, prejudice develops against the attitudes of laborers among both landowners and industrialists to the extent that Philippine labor is even exaggeratedly viewed by some as an impediment to both local and foreign investments.

This brings up the importance of business firms expressly articulating that the first obligation of their CSR is to the employees and workers in their firms, because repeated public assertions, as in truth in advertising, make people honest and compliant—in itself perhaps also a major first step toward developing genuine cooperation with the labor sector.

*(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)*



**Liza Lim**
**Director, Institute of Social Order, Ateneo de Manila University**
as SEA GUARDIAN

**Industry:** Social Development
**Business Challenge:** Enhance financial management capabilities to better serve clients and partner peoples' organizations in communities
**Secret Weapon:** Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting
**Sidekick:** Systems Technology Research Corporation

"We used to do our accounting records manually and our finance staff worked double time to keep up our bookkeeping up-to-date. But as the clients of our services facilities increased, the volume of financial transactions increased as well. Not having resources to hire additional staff, we instead had to acquire a reliable financial management system that can facilitate the cross-checking of financial records with our services office. Our alternative was Microsoft Dynamics. As a business concern operating for profit, Microsoft Dynamics' accounting solution enables us to produce detailed reports for management. As a non-profit entity with various ongoing projects, the solution helps us create financial statements for these projects and generate reports instantly. The time we saved could then be used for strategizing and improving other areas. Now, we can even assist our partner peoples' organizations (POs) in the communities to set up their own bookkeeping systems, and effectively audit our partner POs' finances."

**Efrem Castillo**
**IT Manager, Ultra Mega Multi-Sales, Inc.**
as ULYSSES

**Industry:** Grocery items and school supplies wholesale and retail
**Business Challenge:** Streamline a wide range of financial processes from handling accounts to generating reports
**Secret Weapon:** Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting
**Sidekick:** Systems Technology Research Corporation

"We invested in Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting because we wanted to make our financial processes easier. With our previous system, it was very difficult to track down the data of our accounts and generate reports using the old system. Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting has saved a lot of man-hours and reduced the margin of error. Now we can easily trace receivables problems such as short- and overpayment of accounts. It has also reduced the paperwork that usually leads to accounting errors. The solution generates reliable reports that we can use in any business transaction. The solution has a wide range of report-generating functionalities. We are exploring ways to maximize these functionalities because we strongly believe that the solution can provide us with greater business benefits."

Microsoft Dynamics
Be our next success story.

# 'Do something great'

MANUEL V. Pangilinan

*(Excerpts from a speech delivered by PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan before the graduating class of the Ateneo de Manila University School of Management and School of Science and Engineering.)*

**FIRST PART OF THE JOURney—a student**

The first part of my journey begins with my family. My *lolo* started as a public school teacher in Pampanga and Tarlac, rising through the ranks to become superintendent of public schools and, eventually, secretary of education. My dad began his career as a messenger at the Philippine National Bank, and retired as president of Traders Royal Bank, one of the larger banks in the '80s.

During my elementary years, I had 10 centavos to buy a bottle of coke, five centavos for crackers, another 10 centavos to take the bus home from San Beda in Mendiola—which I made sure I wouldn't lose, otherwise I would have walked home. In college, my weekly allowance at the Ateneo was P10, and that included my jeepney fares.

I had a lot of classmates with cars, some with drivers. They were lucky. But I told myself that some day I will be like them. My scholarships in San Beda and Ateneo were my only fortunes.

In late 1965, as my own graduation was approaching, I had come home from the Ateneo one Saturday afternoon, and spoke with my dad about taking an MBA in the states. I was met with silence—which meant there wasn't enough money for an education abroad and I had to find a way myself. Fortunately, Procter & Gamble was offering a rare scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. It was a national competition. I entered—and won.

**Second part of the journey—a professional manager**

After two years in Philadelphia, I returned home, hopeful about landing a managerial position in a large company. I struck out at first bat. My benefactor—P&G—turned down my application. So I ended up taking the first job I was offered—as executive assistant to the president at Filoil marketing for P1,000 a month.

Without any job experience, we can't be choosers. Grab the first decent job that comes your way, immerse yourself in work and soon, you'll find the right job, or it will find you.

After six years with Phinma, I decided to work abroad. I needed to find myself, to prove that I can stand on my own and succeed.

I was recruited by Bancom International, a Philippine investment bank based in Hong Kong. I learned the dynamics of international finance from my Chinese colleagues—not from the Filipino executives.

Thereafter, I was seconded to a joint venture investment bank with American Express.

I had expected to be appointed CEO of that new bank, but wasn't. Whilst disappointed and even depressed, I soldiered on. This venture failed inside of two years.

A huge dilemma confronted a young man of 30 years—return to Manila or stay with Amex? I decided to remain a soldier of fortune in Hong Kong. I wanted to prove something to myself. I felt I had to prove to Amex that the Filipino can. After four years with Amex, I received a phone call from my boss in London. He said, "You've outgrown Hong Kong and are now ready for London to fast-track your career."

After reflection, I politely said, no. I felt Asia is my home.

**Third part—an entrepreneur and corporate activist**

The third, and final part, starts with First Pacific.

Whilst working in the region, I met some clients—foremost being Anthoni Salim—who were willing to support my idea of a regional banking and trading business. With their help, I founded First Pacific in Hong Kong in 1981. I started out with only six people, on 50 square meters of office space, and little capital. Now, the companies that constitute First Pacific have sales of $5 billion, with more than 60,000 employees across the region.

But I won't tell you about our successes at First Pacific. Instead, I'll describe our failures—some of which indeed became total failures, but some of which we turned around and made a success.

In 1989, we were negotiating to acquire Hanimax, maker of middle- to low-end cameras based in Sydney, Australia. I took the overnight flight to Sydney from Hong Kong, confident that when I arrived the following morning, a letter from an international bank approving our financing would await me. But lo and behold, it was a letter of disapproval.

So there I was in Sydney, committed to purchase Hanimax, but without enough money to complete it. Providentially, there was a competing bidder who sought to take us out of the race, by offering a sum of money. That practice is called "greenmail." Our gambit won $7 million that day, when we had no cards to play.

But there's a sequel to this. Buoyed by confidence—perhaps overconfidence, we were off to the races again, and decided quickly to buy another company. This was Tech Pacific—Australia's largest distributor of computer products. It was indeed a large company with sales in excess of a billion dollars!

It was a disaster. It took us three years to turn its fortunes around. I fell sick from stress and anxiety and, on several occasions, contemplated resigning. But we stood to our tackle and, after those three years, Tech Pacific became Asia's largest distributor of computer products.

In 1998, I came home, after 22 years abroad—after what Father Ferriols often calls "the days of wasted youth."

When we invested in PLDT seven years ago, we faced the massive task of repair and renewal. Critics told us that we couldn't change the culture of monopoly, that misdemeanors in PLDT couldn't be eradicated, that our fixed-line business had no future.

But we made the tough and unpopular decisions at PLDT. Like reducing the number of employees from 14,000 to 9,000. Like changing practices and encouraging transparency and good governance. Like converting the mindset of bureaucrats to that of innovators and entrepreneurs. Decisions about people are always difficult for us because First Pacific is an Asian company with Asian values. But headcount reduction was critical for PLDT to survive.

Now that PLDT has recovered, and is now the most profitable company in the country, my confidence in the Filipino's ability to succeed has been absolutely affirmed. In fact, despite the downsizing I mentioned earlier, we now have more people under our wings—about 19,000—simply because PLDT is now a different company.

And to most of you who might be familiar with Piltel or Talk n' Text—it was a company in extremes. I've had to tell creditor banks that Piltel could not pay its debts—the first time I've done that in my life. My officemates told me to close Piltel. I did not agree. I believed that the cellular frequency it owns, as well as its brand, are potentially valuable, as they have become today. Also, I did not want to imperil the financial health of local banks to which Piltel owed much. After five years' of rehab, Piltel's return to profitability has been close to supernatural. It is now the country's third most profitable company—after PLDT and Smart.

Some of you have raised with me the question—is business bad?

Business is not all bad. It is people—some people at least—that may make business bad. No business can prosper in the long-term without the right values. The best performing companies are those that manage their businesses which meet ethical standards.

Transparency, accountability, integrity, discipline—all these good governance principles—must permeate every policy, every process, of the company, as they do at First Pacific and PLDT.

Before I close, I'd like to make a personal request.

I'd like to ask each of you a favor. Give me bragging rights. Do something great. Sometime in the future, I want to hear some incredible thing you've done. And I'd like to brag that I spoke at your graduation.

In return, I offer you a few more pieces of advice. Stay true. Stay real. Stay true to what's best in yourself, to the best of your experience here at the Ateneo. Trust your instincts. Believe in yourself. Engage in sports, you'll need it as you age.

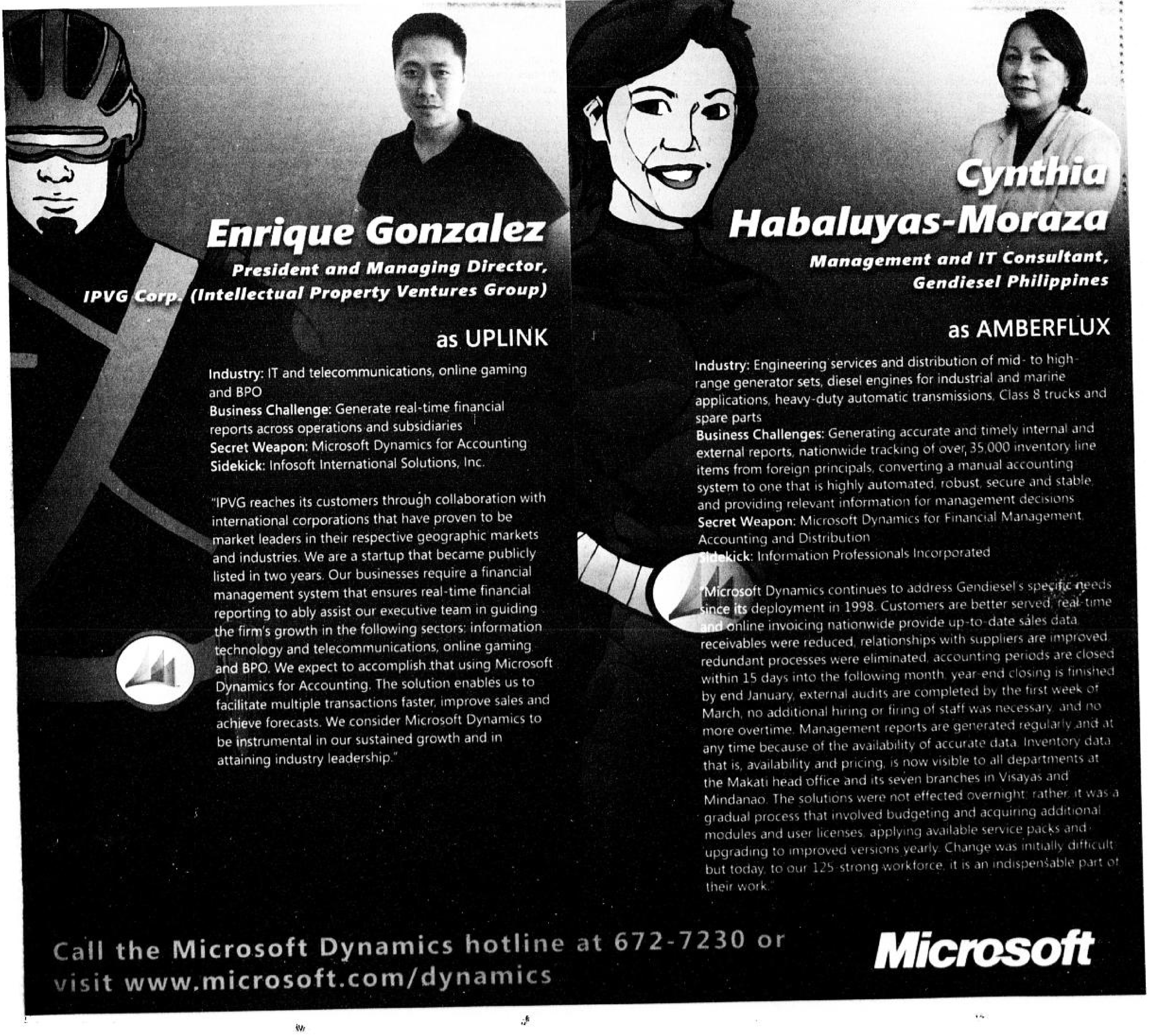
Be brave. Be bold. Find something that moves you and do something about it. You have a voice, speak up. Make a change. You may not always be popular, but you'll be part of something larger and greater than yourself. Besides, making history is cool, isn't it?

But I also want to offer a warning: you will meet people who'll entice you to compromise your principles. They'll try to seduce you with money, power and perhaps, most dangerously, a sense of belonging. Don't let them; it's not worth it. You can have genuine values and still get that job. You can have a conscience and still make money.

Let me send you off with one final thought.

I was born poor, but poor was not born in me. And it shouldn't be born in you either. You can make it. Whatever you may wish to do with your future, you can make it. It gets dark sometimes, but morning comes always. Challenges breed character. Character breeds faith. In the end, faith will not disappoint.

You must not disappoint.



**Enrique Gonzalez**
**President and Managing Director,**
**IPVG Corp. (Intellectual Property Ventures Group)**

as UPLINK

**Industry:** IT and telecommunications, online gaming and BPO
**Business Challenge:** Generate real-time financial reports across operations and subsidiaries
**Secret Weapon:** Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting
**Sidekick:** Infosoft International Solutions, Inc.

"IPVG reaches its customers through collaboration with international corporations that have proven to be market leaders in their respective geographic markets and industries. We are a startup that became publicly listed in two years. Our businesses require a financial management system that ensures real-time financial reporting to ably assist our executive team in guiding the firm's growth in the following sectors: information technology and telecommunications, online gaming and BPO. We expect to accomplish that using Microsoft Dynamics for Accounting. The solution enables us to facilitate multiple transactions faster, improve sales and achieve forecasts. We consider Microsoft Dynamics to be instrumental in our sustained growth and in attaining industry leadership."

**Cynthia Habaluyas-Moraza**
**Management and IT Consultant,**
**Gendiesel Philippines**

as AMBERFLUX

**Industry:** Engineering services and distribution of mid- to high-range generator sets, diesel engines for industrial and marine applications, heavy-duty automatic transmissions, Class 8 trucks and spare parts
**Business Challenges:** Generating accurate and timely internal and external reports, nationwide tracking of over 35,000 inventory line items from foreign principals, converting a manual accounting system to one that is highly automated, robust, secure and stable, and providing relevant information for management decisions
**Secret Weapon:** Microsoft Dynamics for Financial Management, Accounting and Distribution
**Sidekick:** Information Professionals Incorporated

"Microsoft Dynamics continues to address Gendiesel's specific needs since its deployment in 1998. Customers are better served, real-time and online invoicing nationwide provide up-to-date sales data, receivables were reduced, relationships with suppliers are improved, redundant processes were eliminated, accounting periods are closed within 15 days into the following month, year-end closing is finished by end January, external audits are completed by the first week of March, no additional hiring or firing of staff was necessary, and no more overtime. Management reports are generated regularly and at any time because of the availability of accurate data. Inventory data that is, availability and pricing, is now visible to all departments at the Makati head office and its seven branches in Visayas and Mindanao. The solutions were not effected overnight; rather, it was a gradual process that involved budgeting and acquiring additional modules and user licenses, applying available service packs and upgrading to improved versions yearly. Change was initially difficult but today, to our 125-strong workforce, it is an indispensable part of their work."

Call the Microsoft Dynamics hotline at 672-7230 or visit www.microsoft.com/dynamics

Microsoft

# Bicol's treasured abaca earns RP dollars

## AGRIBUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

**By Ephraim Aguilar and Fernan Gianan**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DARAGA, ALBAY—ABACA IS A wonder plant as far as Med Vallejo-Villanueva and husband Sheldon are concerned.

The thousands of workers who have helped make the couple's Shelmed Cottage Treasures a successful abaca craft enterprise in the Bicol region over the past decades would agree.

The Vallejos, from Med's grandparents to her parents, are among the pioneers in the abaca industry here. Shelmed started after Med's parents, Antonio Vallejo and Leticia Punsalan-Vallejo, decided to quit and pass on the business to Med and Sheldon when the two got married in 1973.

### P3,000 capital

Med, a teacher, and Don, a mechanical engineer, were probably the youngest exporters when they went into the production of abaca placemats and doormats.

The couple, who put up P3,000 as initial capital for Shelmed, later expanded their products into *rattan* and *buri* furniture, baskets and other handicrafts made from abaca fiber.

From three employees from the old Vallejo company, where Sheldon used to work as a technical assistant, Shelmed grew to an estimated 60 full-time employees, 1,200 in-house artisans and a community support base of 2,500 families at present.

Currently, Sheldon is president of Shelmed and Med is the executive vice president with Mesh, the couple's eldest daughter who handles marketing, representing the fourth generation of the Vallejos in the abaca export industry.

A big number of abaca workers in the countryside continue to earn a living from the company's ventures into the export of abaca handicraft, paper pulp, furniture pieces, cordage, the most saleable abroad, according to Med.

Fibercrafts, like handbags, carpets, pouches, mats, floral accessories, wrapping material, wall paper, houseware baskets, bins, sotrage containers, lighting fixtures, votive candles, curtains, coasters, hot pads, napkin rings and novelties are very much in demand, according to Mesh.

Exporters continue to fulfill an increasing demand for abaca products by the overseas market whose interests are sustained due to continuous enhancements in materials and innovations in the finished products by producers like Shelmed.

### Challenges

Med says a major challenge to the abaca exporters is the attempt by developed countries to manufacture a synthetic material with similar properties to the abaca fiber.

"Abaca, an earth-grown material, is being challenged by the existence of other products that are also "earth-bound" and less expensive to produce in countries where exporters have better government support," she adds.

Marlon Rebancos, public information officer of the Daraga-Albay-based Fiber Industry Development Authority (Fida), noted how the area being planted to abaca has become smaller.

She explained that due to the low price of the fiber in the local market there have been lesser people venturing in the production of abaca.

"This will mean that there will also be lesser lands tilled for abaca production," she added.

### The export market

Fida records showed that the Philippines dominated the world's abaca export market, account for 83 percent of the supply, with the United States as the country's biggest market for its cordage and raw fiber.

The Bicol region's major markets for its raw fibers are the United Kingdom, Japan, and China while markets for its fibercrafts are the US, Germany, Japan, Australia and Europe.

In 2005, the Bicol region's consumption of abaca reached 14,225 metric tons, 93.87 percent of which were used in pulp production, 5.33 percent in cordage, and .80 percent in fibercraft.

The country's average annual production from 2001-2005 is 65,676 metric tons with Bicol's annual average production placed at 11,750 metric tons.

In the region, 42,813 hectares are planted to abaca with average production per hectare at 383 kilograms.

The current market price for fine quality abaca fiber is P46 to P48 a kilo.

Catanduanes, with the biggest area planted to abaca at almost 22,384 hectares, remains the biggest abaca-producing province in the region and in the country.

The province supplies 20 percent of the abaca fiber production of the Philippines and accounts for 60 percent of Bicol's fiber.

However, the impending ban on the gathering and trading of abaca leaf sheaths or "*bakbak*" to be imposed by the government soon is cause for worry by handmade paper makers, abaca processors and traders in the province.

In the Bicol region, about half of the 44 abaca-processing handicraft makers use abaca leaf sheaths or "bakbak." In Catanduanes, small and medium enterprises, which include handicraft firms, generated $341,000 in export sales and P6.2 million in domestic revenues.

Existing processed abaca industry players include nine handmade paper makers, 11 using handmade paper products and combinations and two concentrating on the production of carpets and abaca "*pinukpok*" textiles.

Executive Order No. 502, signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last Feb. 2, 2006, has banned the harvesting, gathering, buying, selling and mutilating of matured and young leaf sheaths of abaca plants (Musa taxtiles Nee) for commercial purposes.

The leaf sheaths form the solid mass that is the stalk or stem of the abaca plant.

The EO stated that the unabated harvesting of "bakbak" is slowly decimating the existence of abaca and threatens the source of fibers, known all over the world as Manila Hemp and contributing an average of P4.5 billion in revenues throughout the country.

The gathering of the raw material, the EO added, has aggravated the spread of abaca viral diseases by mechanical means and the transporting of the "bakbak" to other areas.

Perfecto Sambajon, officer in charge of the Fida in Catanduanes told the INQUIRER that the removal of "bakbak," widely practiced in Gigmoto and other towns, exposes the inner layer of the abaca plant.

With the removal of more than two layers of leaf sheaths, the plant's growth would be affected and fiber production reduced.

The spread of abaca viral diseases has moved Fida to implement disease control and eradication projects and rehabilitation of affected areas.

ABACA is being challenged by attempts of developed countries to manufacture a synthetic material with similar properties to the abaca fiber.
PHOTO BY NIÑO JESUS Y. ORBETA

After these preventive and suppressive measures against viral diseases in abaca, Rebancos added that perhaps after two to three years, there will be an increase in production.

### Plight of traders, workers

Former Gigmoto vice mayor Edwin Tolledo, however, disputed Fida's contention that the gathering of "bakbak" is detrimental to plant growth.

Tolledo, who has shipped 20 truckloads of dried "bakbak" to processors based in Angeles City, buys the raw material at P7 a kilo from more than 200 gatherers composed mostly of women and children.

Each truckload contains at least 4,000 kilos of "bakbak" which he sells to the Angeles processors for P17 to P20 per kilo to be used as bed covers, wall decorations and other items geared towards the export market.

He said that the gatherers in Bato and San Miguel deliver as much as 300 kilos of dried leaf sheaths every two days, the proceeds of which go to their daily needs and to pay off microfinance loans.

"It would be foolish for me to buy young leaf sheaths which are still wet," Tolledo said, adding the "bakbak" is normally removed by the abaca farmer prior to stripping.

Two other buyers of "bakbak" operate in Gigmoto and Pandan towns, buying the material from abaca farmers for P4 to P6 per kilo while a Tabaco City-based buyer collects the material via a roving cargo truck for the same price.

On the other hand, Simplicio Mendoza, president of the Catanduanes Producers Association, lamented the ban, arguing that the "bakbak" would now be allowed to rot away instead of being used in handmade papermaking as well as for decorative accents in handicrafts.

Belen Tenoria of Summit Handmade Paper & Handicraft said that while she uses only a small amount of "bakbak" for the manufacture of brown paper, it would be impractical for the government to completely prohibit the use of the raw materials especially as she plans to venture in wall décor production.

For her part, Lynn Molina, who has been making gift items for five years under her own Lynn's Arts & Crafts, suggested that the government should instead concentrate on developing skills and providing financing for abaca farmers so that they could exploit to the fullest the many uses of abaca.

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# Sugar is it in the Visayas

**By Carla P. Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—"SUGARCANE is one of the most exciting crops not only in the Philippines, but in the world today," Sugar Regulatory Administrator James Ledesma says.

This is because as oil prices rise and show no sign of dropping drastically, the demand for alternative fuels like ethanol, which comes from sugarcane, will continue.

This crop year (2005-06) millgate sugar prices have been at an average of P1,150 per 50-kilo bag of sugar, compared to an average of P800 per 1-kg in the 2004-05 crop year, Ledesma says.

He also expects prices to remain above P1,000 per l-kg next crop year.

"I think the fundamentals show a more sustainable good price for sugar because if world prices hold, domestic prices will hold," he says.

This crop year, the Philippines expects to produce 2.018 million MT of sugar by the end of the milling season on Aug. 31.

"We are 92 percent finished with milling this crop totaling so far 1.9 metric tons, he says.

As of Thursday, millgate raw sugar was selling at P1,280 per 1-kg and Ledesma says he thinks prices by the end of milling could stay at P1,200 per 1-kg.

Sugarcane in the Philippines is planted on 400,000 hectares of land, the bulk of which is in Negros Occidental. It employs 4 million workers directly and indirectly, he says.

With prices expected to stay good next year, Ledesma expects RP production of sugar to increase next crop year to 2.15 million metric tons, which he says is "very doable."

"We could even hit a high of 2.2 million MT," he says.

THE RISE in oil prices increases demand for alternative fuels like ethanol which comes from sugarcane.

But even with the increase in next year's production, Ledesma expects prices to stay above P1,000 per 1-kg because prices of sugar in the world market remain high.

This is because Thailand had a bad crop while the United States has not recovered from the devastation caused to its sugarlands by two hurricanes last year.

Brazil, on the other hand, has kept its production steady with its sugarcane being used for ethanol production.

"As long as oil prices remain high, ethanol will become more and more an attractive alternative," Ledesma says.

With the world expanding in its use of ethanol as an alternative fuel, good prices of sugarcane will hold indefinitely, Ledesma says.

"Definitely there are reasons to be optimistic, the environment for the sugar industry to operate profitably exists," he adds.

Even if the Philippines produces more sugar than what is needed domestically, it can still export profitably to the world market at 18 US cents per pound or about P980 per 1-kg, he says.

In Negros Occidental construction of an ethanol plant in San Carlos City starts this year and production of ethanol is expected in early 2008, Ledesma says.

The San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. plant in San Carlos City is targeted to have a capacity to produce 25 to 30 million litters of fuel ethanol a year and 8 MW of electricity for partial export to the local grid.

SCBI, which is expected to be the first integrated fuel ethanol distillery and cogeneration plant in the country and is targeted to need approximately 220,000 metric tons of cane per year

Reynaldo Bantug, president of the Confederation of Sugarcane Producers Associations of the Philippines, also says he expects good sugar prices next crop year.

"With the world market prices expected to remain good, we expect domestic prices to remain good, too," he says.

It has been a pretty good year for the sugar industry and as long as oil prices remain high this trend will continue, he says.

In response to good profits, he says many sugar planters had advanced the start of paying of the second half of the wage increase for sugar workers from the original deadline of April 16.

Wage Order No. 13 imposed new minimum wage rates effective June 18, 2005 in Western Visayas.

Workers in the sugar were to receive an increase of P10 a day in basic pay upon effectivity of the new wage order on June 18 last year, and an additional P5 a day in basic pay starting April 16 this year.

Those who could afford have also given their workers bonuses, he said, noting that some planters are still paying for debts incurred from losses in previous crop years.

Enrique Rojas, president of the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters, says domestic sugar prices next crop year will remain good as long as the world market prices will not go down.

This is because it will not be profitable to smuggle world market sugar into the Philippines, he says.

He says they do not expect the Australian, Thai and American sugar industries to recover swiftly so world market prices will remain good.

The US this crop year increased its quota for RP sugar from 150,000MT to 250,000MT because of the damage caused to its sugarlands by two hurricanes last year, he says.

"We expect the US to again include the Philippines as among the sources to fill its sugar quota next crop year," Rojas says.

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# Picking potential leaders

From page B2-6

have problems leading when they are unable to judge their ideas realistically. Brainstorming is not a helpful practice in leadership unless useful ideas are generated.

In the words of John Galsworthy, "Idealism increases in direct proportion to one's distance from the problem." Potential leaders have the rare ability to translate idealistic goals into realistic and workable actions. Leaders are not frozen when obstacles disrupt the perfect plan. They have the flexibility and fortitude to account for resistance to the ideal.

3. When they speak, who listens?

Potential leaders have a "holding court" quality about them. Their words carry weight. What they say is valuable and inspires action.

When watching groups of people interact, in a matter of five minutes, I can pick the leader every time. When it comes time for the group to make a decision, all eyes focus upon the person with the greatest influence.

The extent of a person's influence speaks volumes about their potential in leadership. Here are seven key areas to evaluate the level of influence in a possible hire:

Character—who they are.

Relationships—who they know.

Knowledge—what they know.

Passion—how strongly they feel.

Experience—where they've been.

Past successes—what they've done.

Ability—what they can do.

4. Do others respect them?

Respect is vital for leadership, yet it can be difficult to discern in young leaders who have not fully developed. Peer respect doesn't reveal ability, but it shows character. I'll conclude this edition with the following acronym on respect. I have found it to be a helpful device to evaluate the respectability of emerging leaders.

R—Respects their coworkers and exhibits self-respect. Instead of asking for respect, they give it and earn it.

E—Exceeds the expectations of others. Naturally sets the bar higher than anybody else sets it for them.

S—Stands firm on convictions and values.

P—Possesses maturity well beyond their years and shows self-confidence.

E—Experiences a healthy family life.

C—Contributes to the success of others.

T—Thinks ahead of others. Potential leaders are marked by their ability to outpace the thinking of those around them.

*For information on call 813-2732/03.*

# Drug firm cuts prices of popular medicine

CEMBRANO

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DRUG MAKER GLAXOSMITHKline (GSK) is keen on adopting a marketing scheme initiated by its Manila unit that enables the Anglo-American firm to sell some of its medicine at prices close to tags of generic counterparts in developing countries like the Philippines.

Dubbed "Value Health," the program sells some of GSK's products—distinguished by the pill-on-heart badge stamped above the distinctive argyle design on its packaging—at discounts to give the masses access to quality products. The move allowed GSK to shed its pricey image while broadening its market share.

"Value Health was conceptualized by Filipinos. The program has drawn interest from other GSK markets who are considering adopting it in their markets. Imitation is the best compliment," says GSK Philippines vice president Daisy Cembrano, head of the group which made the program.

Value Health was picked to represent Asia-Pacific at the annual GSK International (which covers operations outside the US and Europe) excellence exchange where it got the top prize—the commercial excellence award.

GSK holds a learning forum annually where best practices are shared and the winning idea voted on by the commercial management teams based on insightful execution, adaptability to other markets and business impact," says Cembrano.

The program is of particular interest to GSK's Latin American operations where a big chunk of the population live below the poverty line.

Launched in 2004, the Value Health portfolio contained nine drugs mostly for common illnesses and antibiotics. After introducing first-line antibiotics in the initial batch, GSK Philippines added five more products led by Zantac (for ulcer and hyperacidity) and higher generation antibiotics such as those used for pneumonia.

Cembrano notes the best sellers accounted for some 70 percent of GSK's gross sales in the Philippines. She says volume has increased much more than the percentage cut in prices.

Cembrano notes that a random survey showed that doctors have prescribed GSK's Value Health drugs to their patients by as much as 50 percent more.

While Value Health did not bring down prices to generic levels, Cembrano says "we made it low enough to make more people use the brands that they really wanted to use in the first place."

GSK Philippines is set to introduce a spin-off program, "Value Health Card," which will offer users discounts of at least 30 percent for high volume medicine such as those for hypertension and diabetes.

In 2000, Cembrano and her team were tasked to identify new opportunities to serve a greater part of the population by offering access to GSK's trusted brands at prices within their reach.

Cembrano says her group was driven because while GSK and other major drug firms have lost to their generics rivals by virtue of the price discounts, "we couldn't sleep thinking that people were not getting the same benefits of branded medicine from generic drugs."

While drug firms spend years on research and development to prove the potency of its drugs), Cembrano says the generic drug companies merely use the same type of molecules in their products without testing whether they were as effective as the original.

Original drug makers have only up to 20 years to market their products and recoup their investments after which generic companies can sell mimic drugs.

Shedding GSK's snooty image, Cembrano admits, has been her frustration in her two dozen years with GSK. This is why she felt a big thorn off her side when GSK Philippines launched Value Health two years ago. "Now we can start selling beyond the top tier of the local market and hit the masses," says Cembrano who started as medical representative lugging around a huge leather bag at the Makati Medical Center in 1982. "Now I can go to a tricycle driver and sell him a product he can afford and that he prefers."

---

## BUY FILIPINO: NOT JUST A CONCEPT BUT AN ANSWER TO A CRISIS

"Why can't we patronize our Filipino products?" That's the question posed to me recently. "We want to spread this Buy Filipino concept, not just for our sake, but because we see this as one of the answers to our economic downfall."

The Buy Filipino concept came from Lamoiyan Corporation, the company owned by Cecilio K. Pedro. It came about in response to the need for comparable and more affordable local products to ease the rising cost of commodities.

BUY PINOY
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Pedro and Ding Salvador, an experienced mogul of consumer products having been exposed in the Southeast Asian region and has recently joined Lamoiyan Corporation, are men of action. "We are Filipinos, and we want to help minimize, if not totally solve the crisis. The finger pointing and accusations can't do us any good at this point. We already have this economic crisis. We have to do something. We have to act."

**"And the Buy Filipino concept can solve this problem?"** "It might, or might not, but at least we should try to lessen our burden. This economic problem is no joke at all because every Filipino is affected by it. Me, you, the workingmen, the ordinary citizen, even the children who are still in their innocence, all of us are bearing this problem."

**"And what would this Buy Filipino concept can achieve?"** "In simple terms if you buy Filipino-made products, you are helping these Filipino Companies who are paying their dues to the government."

**"Can you explain further this Buy Filipino concept?"** "Here's this Filipino company, which is producing products that are comparable to the products of multinationals. The product that these Filipino companies like Lamoiyan is producing is of good quality and world class in category, when you buy this product the income generated can help the company because it provides more employment opportunities for Filipinos and the company continues to pay taxes to our government, which in turn are used for the benefit of the country. The plant is here and the products are made here. Whereas the plants of other companies are in some other places, so when you buy from them, the money goes out of here because they are bringing it to where their plant is located. We are helping other countries, not our own country in that way."

**"How can the consumer get that assurance that they are buying quality products and getting their money's worth?"** "Perhaps the figures will speak for themselves. When Lamoiyan products came out in the market, we had a hard time making the consumers buy our products. That's understandable especially when things are new. But we also had some adventurous buyers who wanted to try new things. We counted on them. We saw to it that our products have that quality seal but can be purchased at a lesser price. During those years we barely made it. But we improved our products. We "feel" our market. What is it that they want? Now we have earned our fair share of the market. Multinationals have been here a long time ago but we are slowly making our mark. Our market share in percentages is increasing. People realize that we are offering to them quality and world class products at a lesser price. We are a Filipino Company. We pay our dues to our government. We are not bringing the money anywhere else. We want to help this country because this is our very own country."

**"So the Buy Filipino concept is going along this line?"** "Yes, buying our Philippine made products will give everyone an opportunity to help in this crisis situation in their own little way. Help a Filipino Company and help our country survive this economic crisis. Nobody, if he or she is a Filipino could say that he or she can't do anything in this crisis. You can do something, even if it is only in the way of patronizing our Filipino Companies like Lamoiyan, Jollibee, and others,"

**"Do you think people will be convinced on this Buy Filipino scheme?"** "We are keeping a positive outlook because as we say Lamoiyan products are undergoing more improvements to suit the needs of the consumers. We are not saying that the products of the multinationals are below standards. What we are trying to say is that if the multinationals have these quality products, we are also at par with them. In fact, our products are already comparable with them in quality and world-class standards but at a lesser price. What we want to emphasize is that everybody can help in overcoming this crisis. Buy Filipino and help your own country surpass this economic crisis."

Simply put that these men behind Lamoiyan Corporation are offering all of us an opportunity to help address our ongoing crisis in our little way. By patronizing local products we keep our home grown companies afloat with the hopes that soon enough this crisis we face may turn into an advantage.

---

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## 98th Annual Convention & Scientific Meeting

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### *"Dental Service at its Best Through Positive Convergence"*

DR. MARIO E. ESQUILLO
President
Philippine Dental Association

I am extra delighted to greet all our member dentists and guests who will attend the 98th PDA Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting which will be held at the Philippine International Convention Center from May 1-6, 2006.

We take cognizance of your effort to be with us and partake of what this convention can offer to our profession. We know that the rapid growth in science and technology would mean new value system, new techniques and development. Therefore commitment to lifelong learning should be the attitude of a dental professional in pursuit of excellence.

Let me congratulate each and everyone for committing yourselves in the service of PDA. Likewise, to one of our sponsors, Lamoiyan Corporation, makers of Hapee toothpastes, our sincere congratulations!

DR. LETICIA O. SANTOS
President-elect & General Chairman
98th PDA Annual Convention & Scientific Meeting

The Philippine Dental Association takes pleasure to welcome all our delegates, participants and guests to the 98th PDA Annual Convention and Scientific Meeting which will take place from May 1-6, 2006 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

With the theme: "Dental Service at its Best Through Positive Convergence", we would like to congratulate all of you for your willingness and commitment to be more socially relevant to the call of times. This convention promises to be a special opportunity for all our members to view the latest technological advances available in the dental world. Such is an imperative force to get acquainted with what's going on in our profession. Be a witness to the various programs and scientific session schedules. These are all primarily prepared for all of you who have consistently manifested a relentless pursuit of wisdom to propagate the highest degree of service for our people.

Congratulations also to all our sponsors especially Lamoiyan Corporation, makers of Hapee toothpastes for continuously supporting the ideals of the Philippine Dental Association.

CECILIO R. PEDRO
Chief Executive Officer
LAMOIYAN CORPORATION

Getting to be 98, by whatever measure, is a rare feat in itself worthy of recognition and commendation. On this note, Lamoiyan Corporation - makers of HAPEE Toothpaste and GUMTECT Gum Formula Toothpaste - wishes to extend the warmest congratulations to the Philippine Dental Association on the occasion of its 98th Annual Convention, 1-6 May 2006, at the Philippine International Convention Center.

Truly, the Philippine Dental Association exemplifies a group of selected and dedicated men and women who have withstood the test of time in the fulfillment of its commitment to serve unceasingly the Filipino community. Yes, 98 years after its foundation, the Philippine Dental Association is as active as ever in advancing the spirit of service and professionalism - indeed, a worthy achievement we all should be proud of.

Lamoiyan Corporation takes cognizance of this fact and salutes all the past and present officers and members of the Philippine Dental Association for this uncommon feat of service and dedication.

May this year's Convention theme - DENTAL SERVICE AT ITS BEST THROUGH POSITIVE CONVERGENCE - prove to be in best partnership with Lamoiyan Corporation commitment - MAKING THE DIFFERENCE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD - as we all march onward together for a better Oral Health Care for all.

Long live the Philippine Dental Association.

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| DATE | TIME | ACTIVITY |
|---|---|---|
| April 30, 2006<br>(Sunday) | 1:00 - 5:00 pm | Ingress of Contractor<br>Kits Assembly |
| May 1, 2006<br>(Monday) | 9:00 - 5:00 pm | Ingress of Trade Exhibitors |
| | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Registration |
| | 10:00 - 12:00 nn | Pierre Fauchard Academy |
| | 2:00 - 11:00 am | ICD Convocation |
| May 2, 2006<br>(Tuesday) | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Registration |
| | 9:00 - 10:00 am | Opening, TRADE EXHIBITION |
| | 11:00 - 12:00 nn | **Opening Health Screening** |
| | 3:00 - 5:00 pm | **Formal Opening**<br>*98th Annual Convention* |
| | 3:00 - 5:00 pm | **Council of Deans**<br>**Phil. Ass. of Dental Colleges** |
| | 6:00 - 9:00 pm | **Welcome Dinner**<br>**(for Dental Faculty Members)** |
| | 6:00 - 12:00 nn | **Fellowship Night** |
| May 3, 2006<br>(Wednesday) | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Registration |
| | 9:00 - 5:00 pm | Scientific Sessions |
| | 9:00 - 5:00 pm | **Presidents' Dialogue** |
| | 9:00 - 6:00 pm | Trade Exhibition |
| | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Health Screening |
| | 10:00 - 1:00 pm | Alumni Homecoming |
| | 7:00 - 12:00 mn | House of Delegates<br>*(1st Session)* |
| May 4, 2006<br>(Thursday) | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Registration |
| | 8:00 - 3:00 pm | Election of PDA Officers |
| | 9:00 - 5:00 pm | Scientific Sessions |
| | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Health Screening |
| | 9:00 - 6:00 pm | Trade Exhibition |
| | 7:00 - 12.00 nn | **Awards Night** |
| May 5, 2006<br>(Friday) | 8:00 - 4:00 pm | Registration |
| | 9:00 - 12:00 nn | **House of Delegates**<br>*(2nd Session)* |
| | 9:00 - 5:00 pm | Scientific Session |
| | 9.00 - 6:00 pm | Trade Exhibition |
| | 5.00 - 12:00 nn | **Presidents' Night** |
| May 6, 2006<br>(Saturday) | 9:00 - 12:00 nn | Trade Exhibition |
| | 12.00 - 6:00 pm | Egress of Trade Exhibits |

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# BUSINESS*Monday*

## Picking potential leaders

**A LEADER'S WAY**

*John C. Maxwell*

THE LAW OF THE INNER CIRCLE: Those who are closest to me will determine the level of my success.

The year was 1864. The battle for America's future had been raging for over two and a half years.

Despite having a superior economy, an enormous edge in resources, and a far greater population, the North had been unable to gain the upper hand in the Civil War. President Abraham Lincoln was frustrated at the North's inability to achieve victory.

Lincoln was forced to confront the reality of the Law of the Inner Circle. Although a brilliant leader, Lincoln was not a military man. As such, his success overseeing the Civil War depended upon finding a skillful field general to translate material advantages into actual victories.

Lincoln's two prior military commanders, George McClellan and Henry Halleck, had failed miserably. Each had repeatedly squandered opportunities to crush the Southern Army. With the war's outcome hanging in the balance, Lincoln's next selection would be one of the biggest decisions of his Presidency.

Noting the indecisiveness of previous army generals, Lincoln chose tough-minded Ulysses S. Grant to lead the army. Grant's willingness to pay the price of a total war depleted the South's scant resources, and led to the North's eventual victory.

### Identifying potential leaders

Good leaders realize the significance of surrounding themselves with talented people. That's why leaders repeatedly ask me, "How can I be sure to hire the right person?"

I have never discovered a foolproof hiring practice, but I do know finding a great hire goes hand in hand with identifying potential leaders.

I'll explore eleven questions I use to spot a potential leader. Before I begin, I'd like to give credit to my mentor and friend Fred Smith. Several of these questions were developed from my conversations with him.

1. When looking for a leader, do I see a constructive spirit of discontent?

Constructive discontent is a leader's unscratchable itch. It's the trait making a leader averse to average and opposed to the status quo.

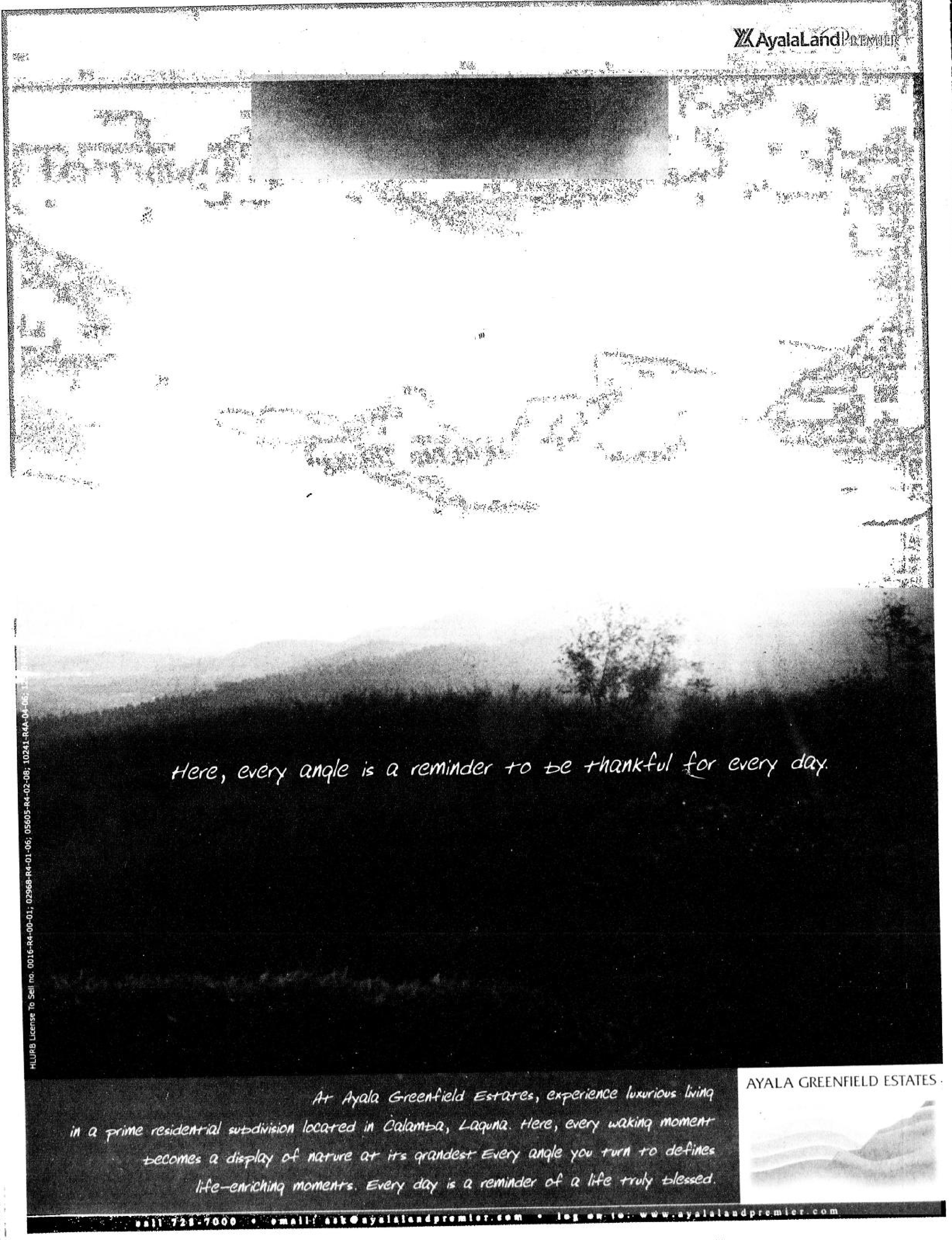
Potential leaders possessing constructive discontent will question existing systems and push for improvements. They perceive problems and come up with solutions.

As Kouzes and Posner say, leaders have a pioneering instinct. They are not afraid to step out into the unknown. They are willing to take risks, innovate, and experiment in order to find new and better ways to operate.

2. Do they offer practical ideas?

Highly original thinkers can

PICKING/B2-4



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# LifeStyle

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# The trees of Tehran

**By Juvenal Sanso**
*Contributor*

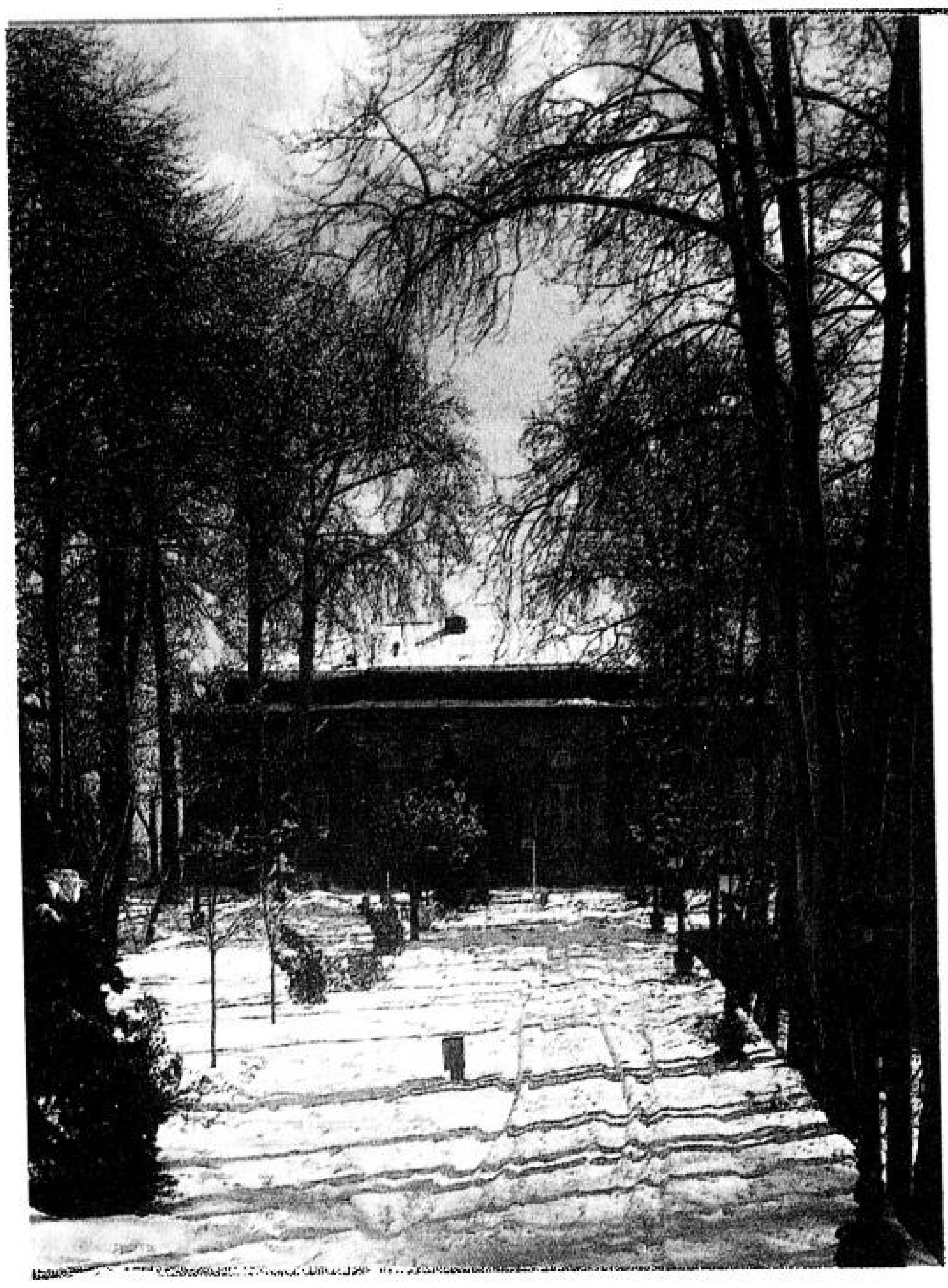
TEHRAN IS NOT ONE of the most beautiful of the big cities I know. It has some 16 million inhabitants in its outflowing borders that join other borders among the majestic mountains and dazzling golden-ochre pinks of the desert portions of the geography.

The structures architecturally survive through strife and earthquakes and the most inhuman eight-year war with Iraq, which have devastated vital human and material forces. The struggles are mirrored in the decaying elements of the city and in the hodgepodge discontinuities of urban planning.

But a most gratifying coherence is maintained by the phenomenal amount of trees nourishing the arteries of the city.

The city goes up toward the magnificent mountains. It starts at the bottom where the least affluent members of society reside. As one ascends, one finds the quality of the habitat improving. Upward, one finds the superb de-luxe apartment buildings

THE TREES/C2



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Iran's respect for trees is amazing for us who murder our forests and think that trees are for degradation and logging

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AHMADSHAHI Building

AHMAD Shahi Place (Niavaran Place)

# The trees of Tehran

FARSHCHIAN Museum

From page C1

with marble-floor garages and underground swimming pools.

One witnesses a construction frenzy, which also involves restoring many important buildings, mosques, universities, hospitals. The roads are extremely well kept.

What unifies this kaleidoscope are the trees and parks of all dimensions and categories. Truly they are innumerable!

The big parks are splendid and big. There one finds joggers and children and timid lovers (for this society does not approve of "public displays of affection.")

Every three or four blocks, there is some kind of restful, tree-filled garden, which may develop later in another few blocks into a truly big green square.

The trees are a presence that is absolutely willed and totally ingrained in this society's ethics. Iran's respect for trees is amazing for us who murder our forests and think that trees are for degradation so that we conduct all kinds of logging.

I have been told that there are about as many trees as inhabitants in the city. I can assure you that, at times, you may humorously remark that pedestrians are less respected than the trees, for the traffic is truly anguishing to a foreigner like me.

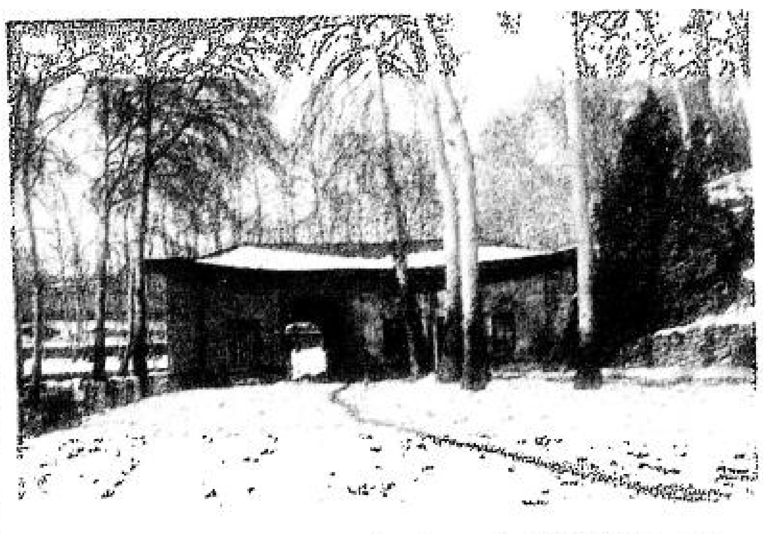
The Tehran pedestrian population negotiates around, about and across the traffic of cars, motorcycles, trucks and buses, amid whirling masses of metal and gasoline vapors.

In the face of this, the ladies with the swirling *chadors* seem the most in danger, looking like Batman with his billowing cape totally unconcerned with the roaring traffic.

The trees are strongly protected. They are numbered and catalogued by the city hall. They are literally untouchable. The roads are obliged to give way to the trees and the sidewalks. The trees take priority in road space.

The arboreal priority is clearly seen in how some trees are truly in the middle of the streets and sidewalks. Apparently the road builders had dodged around the giants, which stand in their own constantly irrigated little channels, taking their water directly down from the mountains.

It is a wonder to see how the trees thrive with their roots soaking in floods of water rushing down at considerable speed, gurgling and bubbling. They must be of a special kind unknown in other parts of the world.



GREEN Museum Palace up close (top); and Coach house (Omidvar Brothers Museum)

Erosion is ignored by the trees at all seasons. Or, are they the ones preserving the terrain? Can we learn something from this, we with our landslides?

## Arboreal consistency

The arboreal philosophy continues. Whenever there's a construction or repair, the trunks of the trees are protected by skirts.

Some buildings have to allot enough space for the trees to continue their royal existence. Façades are deviated, and every other consideration has to swerve, veer, depart, digress, diverge to accommodate trunks and branches of the kings of the land.

Some buildings have to carve out holes to let in the irregularity of a "master." I am sure some architects would like to get up one night and saw down this impudent denizen.

Since there are only very few police forces visible at all hours of the day and night, they could very easily sneak out with an electric saw and cut the "obnoxious obstacle." But the trees are not cut, so it seems respect for trees is truly a cultural trait among Iranians.

In the main arteries, a good fourth of road space is allotted to the watering system containing the massive trunks in constant, eternal waters. People cross the very wide streets and then have to find a quaint Japanese-like little bridge to get on to the sidewalk.

These considerable channels meet eventually with the streets at the intersections. The angles of approach are breathtaking to an inexperienced flatfooted paleface like me; it demands a lot of calculating, measuring and expert decisions.

For the Iranian, all this is ingrained and I still have to see a car slipping into these deep watery excavations.

Many a joy comes with the fountains one finds in most gardens and parks. Very thankfully there are no signs of dog droppings unlike in Paris!

## Snowy experience

One truly magical moment came to me in full winter when snow in the purest covered the trees, forming white arches that could have been imagined by a gothic architect or miniaturist. It was breathtaking to have all the little imperfections of urban wear and tear pampered into undulating masses of comfortable marble, reaching up to the highest branch and leaf.

The trees continued their sentry-like presence in total tranquillity. Their cold feet, meanwhile, gurgled waters from the equally white-enrobed mountains, which all seemed to give the joy of serenity to all the living.

In other parts of Iran, the corrugations and undulations of the terrain were beautifully covered by what looked like white sugar powder, giving an extra quality to the bas relief of endless kilometers. This was the case when I was on my way to Ispahan.

I could not hold back my tears, for the colors were heightened into myriad shades of swirls and convolutions and harmonious profiles.

On the way back I had the other side of the silvery coin, the peaks and the valleys interlocking toward Tehran, growing more and more snowy in the north.

Ispahan changed into a magical Persian carpet as the ground of the city became a form of levitation. Inside the great masterpiece of the main mosque, with its ravishing white slices of perspective, snow was enshrined in portals and arches of pure colors.

The mosaics had me in a feeling of floating joy. The domes in blazing blues and greens topped the great portals of the splendid square, where snow made the plants and every corner a delight.

No photo can capture the rapport between humanity and the continuing presence of the cultural past. No movie could ever wake up the senses to an experience so alive that allows one to converse with the centuries revived.

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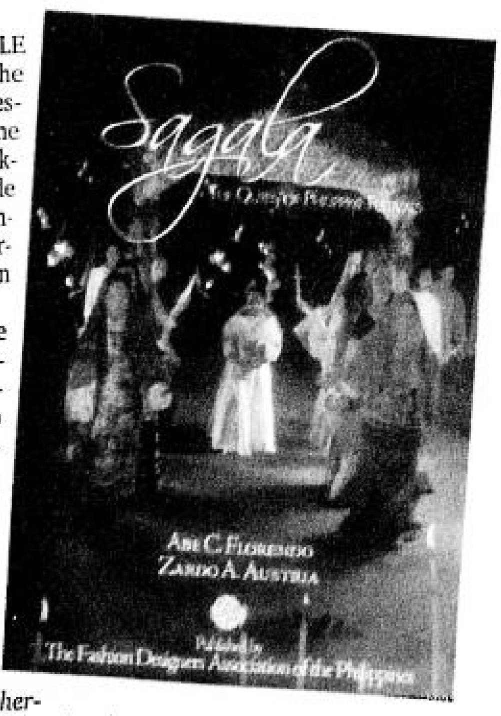
# 'Sagala' book pays tribute to colorful May feasts



THE COFFEE-TABLE book "Sagala, The Queen of Philippine Festivals," delves into the exciting historical background of the Flores de Mayo and the Santacruzan, colorful Marian summer feasts in the Philippines.

It is also a treasure trove of vintage photographs and illustrations dating back to the 1890s, complemented by an exclusive folio of glamorous photographs of contemporary *sagalas*—the beauty queens, fashion models, entertainment icons—along with distinguished *hermanos* and *hermanas* wearing the best creations of the Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines (FDAP).

The book is written by Abe Florendo and Zardo Austria. A veteran journalist, editor and book author, Florendo was a recipient of the San Lorenzo Ruiz Award for Print. Austria was editor of several lifestyle, travel and fashion magazines, and considered a pioneering fashion stylist for national publications.

Meant to be a contribution to the preservation and enhancement of Philippine culture and heritage, "Sagala" is published by FDAP to commemorate its 25th anniversary. Headed by Edgar San Diego, the FDAP is the premier and oldest organization of fashion designers in the country.

The group is credited for some of the most spectacular Sagala festivals held in the country like the Miss Universe Flores de Mayo in 1994 and the Santacruzan ng Centenario in 1998.

Since the '80s, FDAP has also been religiously participating in the country's biggest and most glamorous Flores de Mayo festival organized annually by the Congregacion del Santisimo Nombre del Niño Jesus, City of Manila, Department of Tourism and Unilever Philippines.

In hardbound and with over 200 glossy pages in full color, "Sagala" will be formally launched in a glittering affair at the Century Park Hotel on April 25 at 6 p.m.

The book launching will be highlighted by a photo exhibit of "Sagalas, Hermanos and Hermanas" prepared by the book's principal photographer, FDAP member Richard Papa, along with a fashion presentation of the best of FDAP's Sagala creations.

Call 3745093 or 4169383, or visit the FDAP website at www.fdapsilver.com.

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# Why not join an environmental camp?

From page C4

tion project.

The camp ends in Sorsogon, from where participants take the overnight bus back to Manila.

Island Caravan's four-day Agusan Adventure Feat links participants with local DENR officials who brief them on the environmental importance of the vast Agusan Marsh.

Historians introduce the cultural magnitude of the marsh area, pointing out the ancient *balanghai*, proving the existence of advanced pre-Hispanic civilization in the area.

Sports activities organized in the environmentally sensitive locale include trekking, camping, climbing, rappelling, caving, and lessons on the single-rope technique.

Departure is from Butuan after a visit to the *balanghai* artifacts in the museum.

Wild, Green Summer is only one of the novel tourism offerings by Island Caravan. Espousing responsible tourism, the company's offerings present an authentic view of the Philippines.

Locals (residents, students, cultural or natural experts) from the host destinations take visitors through their home grounds with first-hand familiarity. There are presentations by expert historians, cultural and environmental workers knowledgeable about the resources in the area.

Island Caravan tours are designed as personal, meaningful encounters with Philippine life, an approach that radically differentiates this company from other tour operators.

PHILIPPINE CENTENNIAL TREE

AGUSAN'S Centennial Tree

Island Caravan also organizes walking tours in urban areas (Vigan, Manila, Iloilo) or special weekend culinary-cultural-historical tours in Southern Tagalog.

Island Caravan tours are extraordinary experiences, responsible tourism offerings of specialized tours—historic, cultural, culinary, sports, environmental, trekking, or hiking.

Upon request the agency can tailor special tours to specific requirements of large or small groups.

This summer, try discovering the Philippines for what it really is. See the authentic Philippines not as a tourism product packaged in slick, commercial tourist-trap events for the mass traveler.

Island Caravan summer departures are: Sorsogon Conquest, April 29-May 3; North Luzon Rediscovery, May 13-15; Agusan Adventure, May 25-28.

*E-mail bgozun@hotmail.com sagip_pasig@yahoo.com or skoal@skyinet.net. Call 8967569 or 8961910; fax 8961893.*

*E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com*

---

# Manila Cathedral to mark 25th year as basilica

THE MANILA METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL-Basilica, the premier church of the Archdiocese of Manila and seat of the newly installed Prince of the Church, Gaudencio B. Cardinal Rosales, will celebrate its 25th anniversary as a basilica with activities leading up to April 27.

Evolving from a *nipa* church built in 1571 by Fray Juan de Vivero, the present neo-Romanesque-Byzantine Manila Cathedral was elevated to the status of a basilica by virtue of a papal decree issued *motu proprio* by Pope John Paul II on April 27, 1981.

The honor was granted by the Vatican because of the cathedral's rich and colorful history spanning over 400 years, its picturesqueness and excellent architecture, and its role in the lives of the faithful as venue for various religious, liturgical and cultural activities in the country.

To kick off the anniversary celebration, an exhibit will be opened today. The exhibit at one of the side chapels will highlight the significant events in the cathedral during the past quarter of a century.

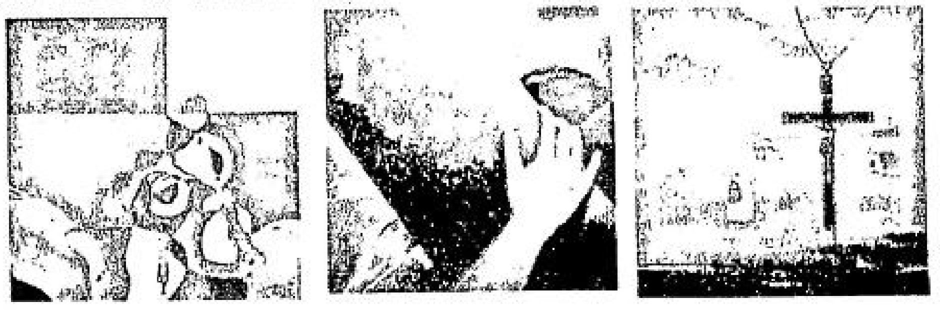
Also today, at 12:10 p.m., the Triduum, or a three-day Mass series, will begin. It will end with Manila Auxiliary Bishop Bernardo Cortez as the presider on April 26.

On April 25, at 12:10 p.m., Cardinal Rosales will preside at the anniversary Mass during which will be launched several cathedral projects: a video documentary and a tour brochure on the Cathedral Basilica; a newly added section in the Cathedral-Basilica's website providing details about the church's becoming a basilica; and the Manila Metropolitan hymn.

Before the Mass, the Cardinal will also officiate the blessing of the Cathedral Basilica's newly renovated sacristy and the new liturgical vestments.

On April 28, at 7:30 a.m., a piano concert will be held, featuring Italian pianist Maestro Rolando Nicolosi. The concert will be in remembrance of the late Pope John Paul II and in honor of Cardinal Rosales.

# Images of death and rebirth



**"I THIRST," by Tres Roman; "Carrying of the Cross," by Elios Santos; and "Krusipiho," by Fidel Sarmiento**

HOW NEARLY 500 YEARS OF CATHOLIC Christianity have affected the Filipino worldview is shown in the Easter exhibit "Behold" in Gallery Nine (tel. 6877302) in SM Megamall. The show displays nearly 60 works of interpretations of the Passion iconography by senior and young artists.

Easily the most striking is an untitled work by Buen Calubayan along the lines of the Arte Povera movement. The canvas is wrapped with cellophane; inside are *sampaguita* flowers trapped by plastic, value lighting and the transfixed stare of viewers.

One could take the work as Calubayan's depiction of the meekness and purity of the Lamb, represented here by the fragile *sampaguita*, put to the slaughter. Through the artistic mode he has chosen, the artist evokes as well the Resurrection, since the white petals browned by decay and crushed by the oppressive tape seem to beckon from the frame, auguring rebirth.

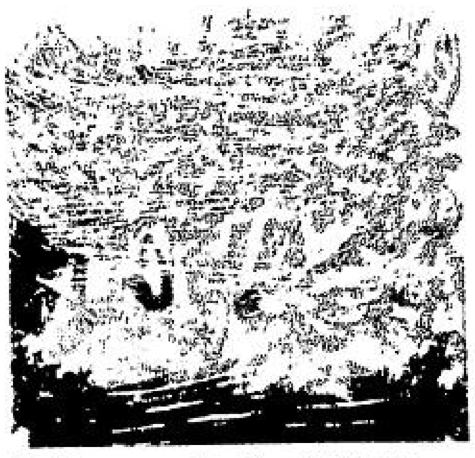
Of course, the work realizes a special fulfillment of artistic vision because of its materiality. By its use of natural and manmade media, it probes meditatively on the relation between life and art, seeing and thinking, faith and truth.

The same investigation is achieved by Fidel Sarmiento in "Krusipiho" but in a mode that is radically different from Calubayan's hyperrealism.

The viewer sees the crucifix in the foreground set against a dreamlike landscape where one sees vestiges of the country's Hispanic heritage and a mountainscape throbbing with light and promise.

The work, therefore, is a cultural inquiry into the history of evangelization in the Philippines.

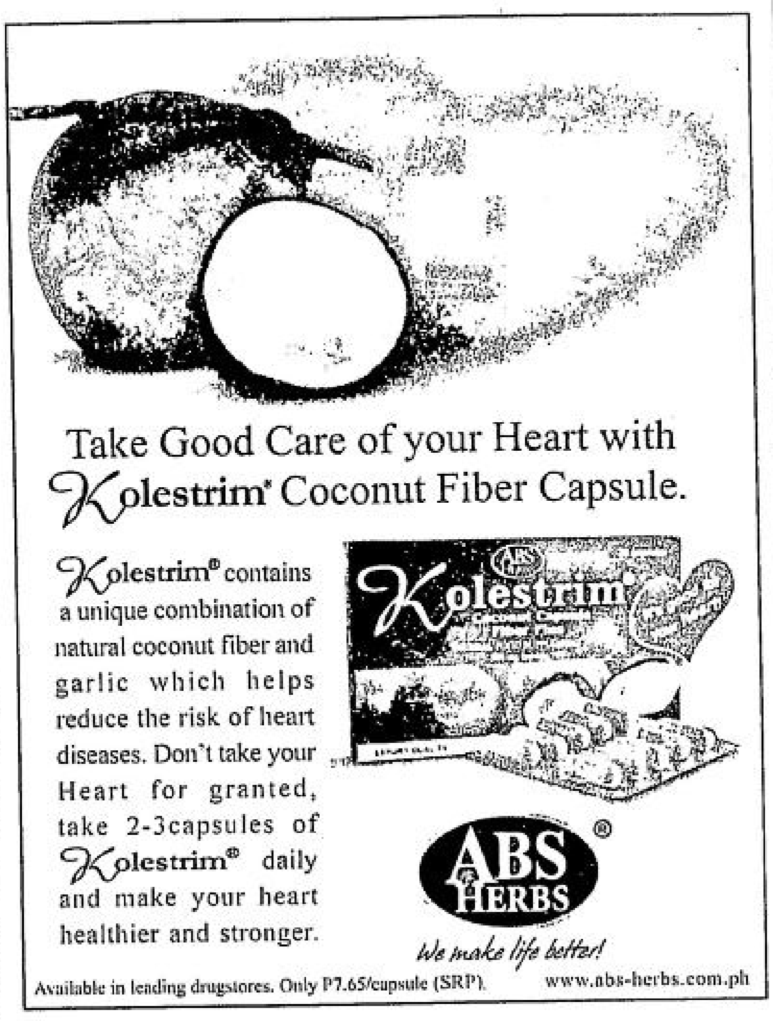
Tres Roman's "I Thirst" portrays Christ through a combination of figurative and abstractive modes. The melding powerfully embodies a key moment of Christ on the Cross.



**ARTE Povera work, by Buen Calubayan**

Meanwhile, Elios Santos' well-composed "Carrying of the Cross" engages the viewer by its trick of foregrounding the Cross and hiding the face of Christ, thus highlighting the earthly humiliation and suffering of the Son of God.

*Lito B. Zulueta*



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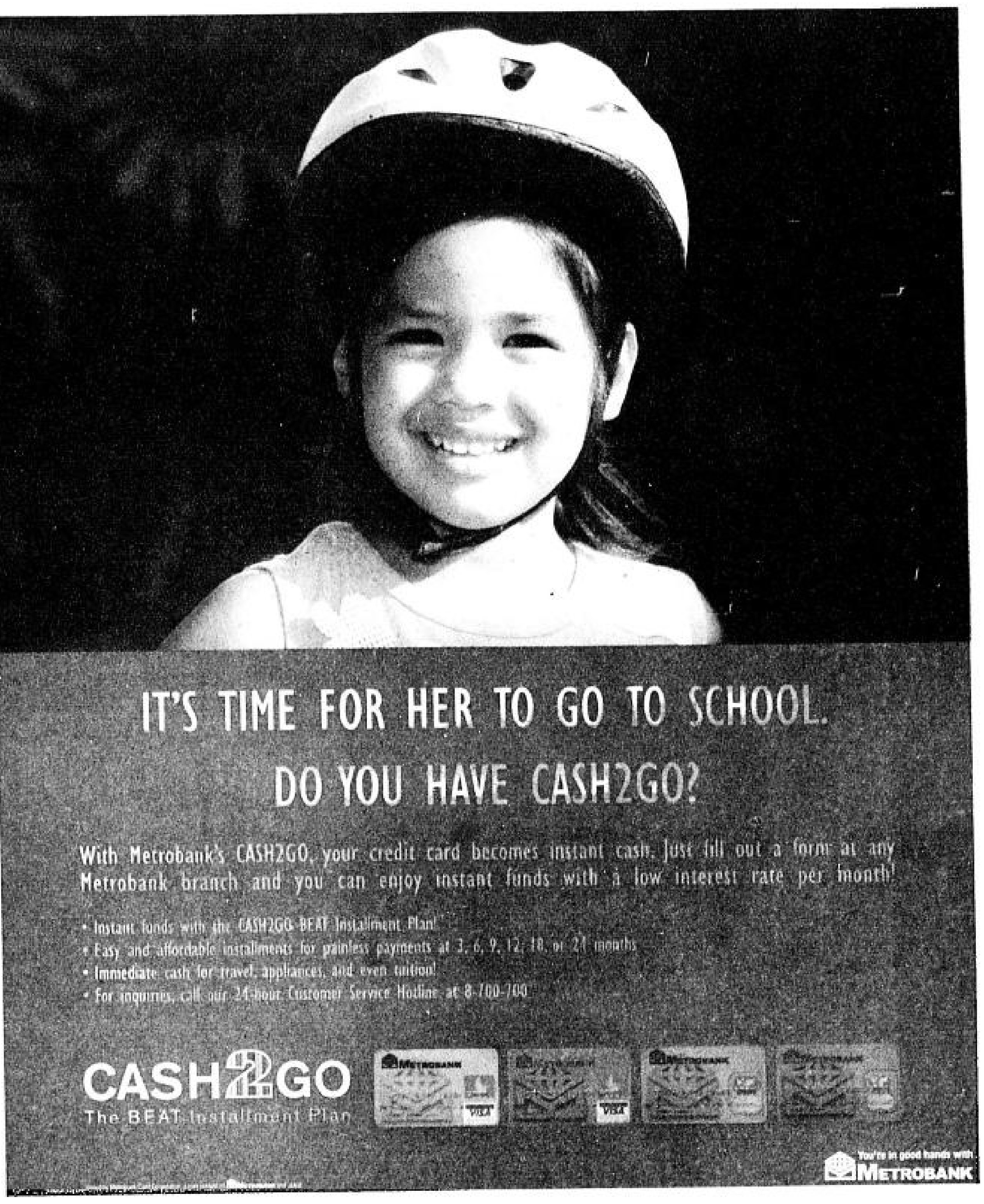

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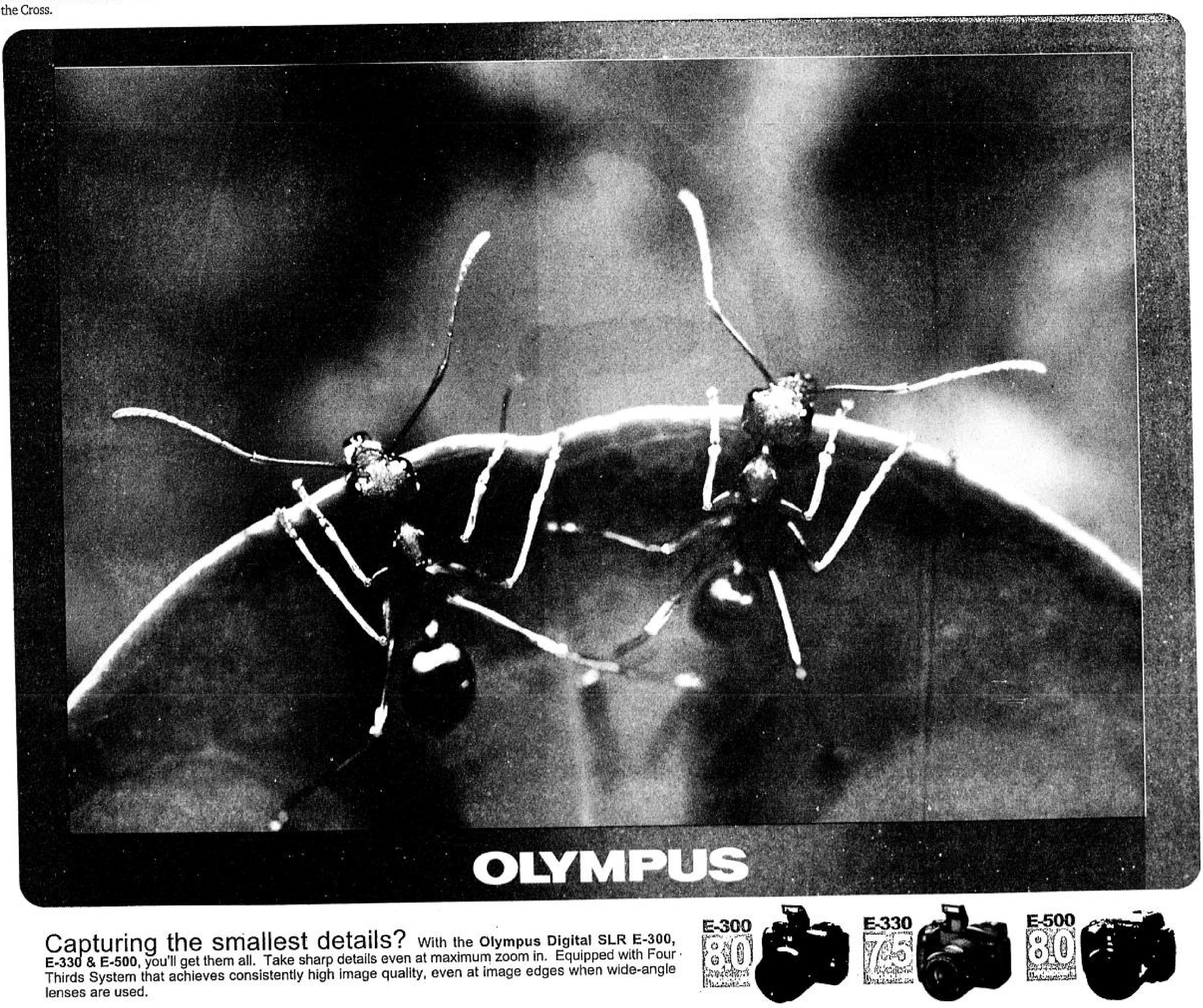

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# Why not join an environmental camp?

**PRIDE OF PLACE**

*Augusto F. Villalon*

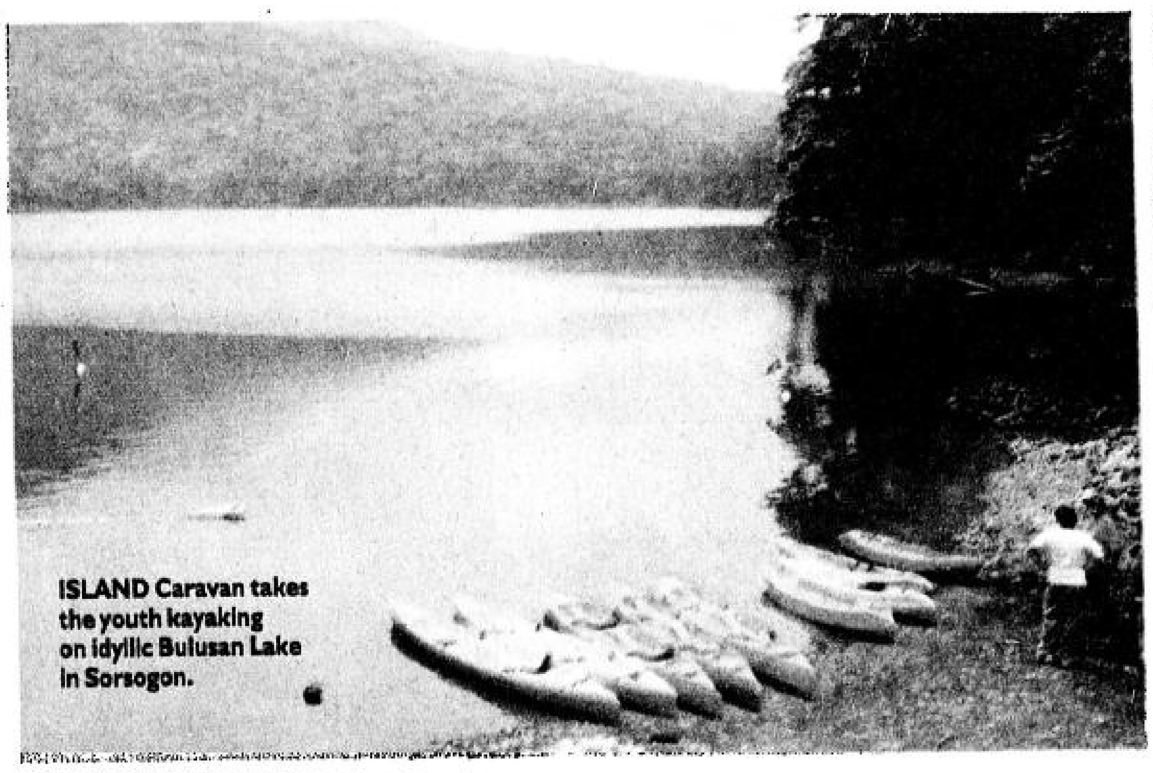
"WILD, GREEN SUMMER" IS A perfect vacation activity that parallels Earth Day Network, an NGO that marks the month of April with environmental activities planned to inspire young Filipinos to care for their environment.

Innovative tour organizer Island Caravan introduces Wild, Green Summer, an outstanding summer program for Filipino youth ages 16-21 that combines travel, sports and environmental activities.

The environmental camps running four to six days take urban youth out of the cities to explore nature in Agusan del Norte or Sorsogon, exposing them to the stunning beauty of the Philippine countryside. It is highlighted by the interactive participation of recognized environmental or cultural resource persons, who advocate respect and care for the natural and cultural environments.

In cooperation with the Department of Tourism, Island Caravan provides guides who supervise the student activity and introduce them to local officials, environmental NGOs and technical experts from the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) who provide the learning component of the summer camps.

Camps create awareness and appreciation of the natural environment through a range of sightseeing and sports activities which include trekking, rappelling and kayaking.



ISLAND Caravan takes the youth kayaking on idyllic Bulusan Lake in Sorsogon.

There is another agenda to the camp. Youth participate in environment work. During Wild, Green Summer camps, participants plant and reforest, seed fish in lakes, clean up beaches, or perform whatever task is necessary to bring Nature and man into harmony.

Instead of classroom modules, community immersion allows participants to interact with local officials, scientists, fishermen and farmers who provide personal insights into rural life and its environmental responsibilities which ensure the continuation of the people's nature-based livelihood.

In a camp atmosphere of fun and camaraderie, participants learn factual and hard lessons on respect of Nature, ultimately evolving into environmental warriors.

## Conquest

Sorsogon Conquest begins in Legazpi, then continues to the Cagsawa ruins and other cultural sites during the five-day tour, then on to the PNOC Geothermal Plant where participants are introduced to the facility. They will be billeted there.

From there, they will do forest treks together with DENR officials and visit a bat sanctuary, springs and waterfalls.

After meeting villagers at the Maharang Village Hot Springs, they will be accompanied by Protected Area Management Board officials to seed Bulusan Lake and to replant mangroves at a reforesta-

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"I HAVE nothing but my art and my music. They are my real wealth."

# Cecile Licad survives cancer scare; holds recital of her life in Manila

## In thanksgiving during her concert here, she will also go to Paoay Church

**By Pablo A. Tariman**
*Contributor*

WHEN CECILE LICAD PERforms in Philamlife Theater on Thursday, April 27, I will have watched her performing career for 31 years. Which means I know how she performed as a 14-year-old, as a debutante at 18, as a young wife at 25, and as mother at 26.

We first met in 1975 during a performance at St. Agnes Academy in Legazpi City.

I wasn't that deep on classical music yet, but that performance changed my entire outlook. I couldn't sleep after that and I was listening to her recital tape day in and day out. I suppose this is what they call obsession.

What do I remember about that Bicol

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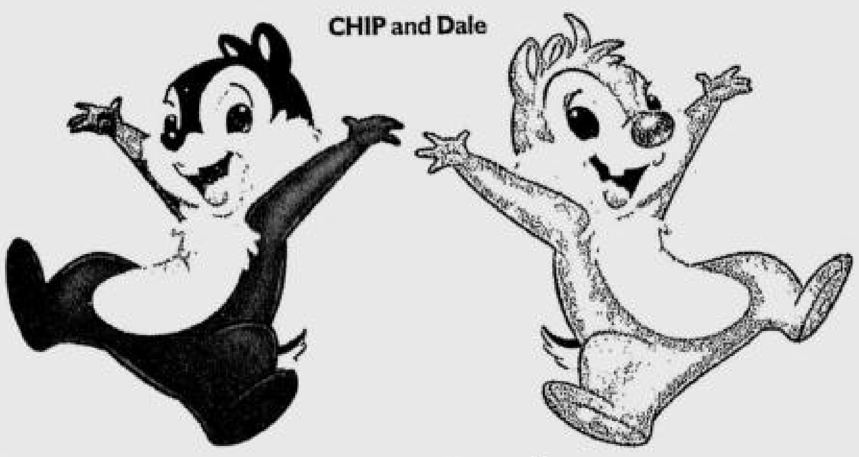


CHIP and Dale

DONALD Duck

MICKEY Mouse

GOOFY

# Disney characters invade Manila

GET SET FOR A MAGICAL, SPECtacular summer with Disney's biggest stars as the Ayala Malls bring you "Jammin'.with Disney."

The event, which features a "Musical Meet and Greet" with the Disney characters, will have its first stop at Ayala Center Makati on April 27, 28, 29, and 30, 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m.

The editor of Princess Magazine will conduct autograph signing at the Princess Castle at Glorietta 4 Park on April 27, 2 p.m. Young fashionistas will also love the Disney Fashion Shows on May 6-7, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

At the Alabang Town Center, the schedules are: May 4 and 5, 12 p.m., 2 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.; May 6 and May 7, 12 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The fashion show is on May 13-May 14, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

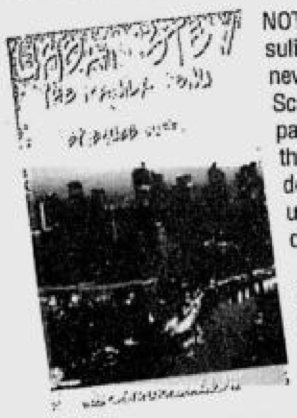
In Bonifacio Global City's Market! Market!, the shows will be on May 11, 12, 13 and 14, 12 p.m., 2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The fashion show is on May 20-21, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

The editor of W.I.T.C.H magazine will also conduct autograph signing at the Kandrakar Maze on May 11 at 3:30 p.m.

The Disney tour then flies south to Ayala Center Cebu on May 18-21, at 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

See Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Goofy, Donald Duck and Chip and Dale as they take us through some of Disney's classic songs, including "Feel the Magic," "Zip A Dee Doo Dah," and the classic "Mickey Mouse Club March." For the first time ever in the Philippines, a special edition of "Two Worlds, One Family" from Disney's animated feature "Tarzan" will also be performed.

## 'Urban Stew: The Manila Menu'



NOTHING BETTER CAPTURES AND CAPsulizes the peculiar tales of Manila than the new book "Urban Stew: The Manila Menu" by Scottish-born author Bruce Curran. The 120-page book is a compilation of 28 essays on the author's firsthand experience and anecdotes on urban living in the metropolis—the unforgettable, heart-warming, hilarious and disgusting, but all of them distinctly Filipino.

Comparing living in Manila to a "stew," Curran subdivides the book into the courses of a meal such as entrées, aperitifs, snacks, soups, *meriendas*, side dishes and desserts, with each essay with its own story to tell.

Having accustomed himself to the metro's way of life, the author talks about amusing tales such as the Filipinos' cell phone cult, penchant for soap operas, lavish celebration of special occasions, and the city's vibrant night life.

He also presents an off-the-cuff take on perennial problems such as poverty, traffic gridlock, urban chaos, media piracy, the sometimes-dreadful taxi culture, the lack of discipline on the road and elsewhere, and the country's bumbling bureaucratic jungle, among others.

His witty discussion of these issues is a veiled call on government authorities to take action.

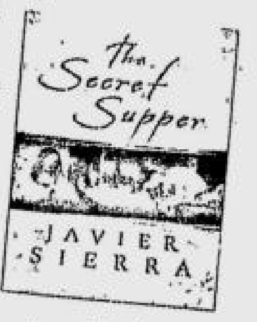
In the last chapters of the book, the author goes beyond the confines of the megalopolis and explores the natural wonders of the countryside.

Bruce Curran is a motorist, sailor, traveler and beekeeper who has traveled 44 countries to discover the beautiful sites in the world.

Currently working as financial adviser in Makati, the author is publishing a series of glossy coffee-table books titled "Combing the Coral Carpet," which describes the archipelago's lush underwater marine life. Published by Waterline Leisure Publication, it is available at leading bookstores.

Call 751-0963 or 0916-3596357, email brucemcurran@hotmail.com or log on to www.bancasafaris.com.

## Leonardo da Vinci in mystery novel

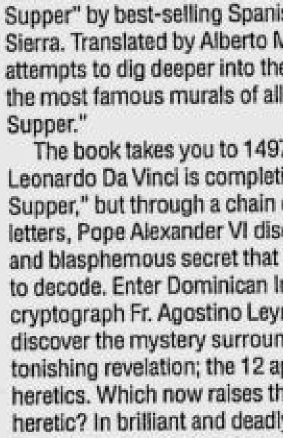


The Da Vinci mystery continues with "The Secret Supper" by best-selling Spanish author Javier Sierra. Translated by Alberto Manguel, the novel attempts to dig deeper into the mystery of one of the most famous murals of all time, "The Last Supper."

The book takes you to 1497 in Milan; Leonardo Da Vinci is completing "The Last Supper," but through a chain of anonymous letters, Pope Alexander VI discovers a baffling and blasphemous secret that he is determined to decode. Enter Dominican Inquisitor and cryptograph Fr. Agostino Leyre, assigned to spy on the painter to discover the mystery surrounding the painting. The book gives us an astonishing revelation; the 12 apostles in the painting are actually well-known heretics. Which now raises the question: Is Leonardo Da Vinci, indeed a heretic? In brilliant and deadly war of wits between the Inquisitor and the Painter, the book takes the reader on a mind-boggling ride to crack the secrets surrounding the painting.

The book is available at PowerBooks.

## Focus on Ludlum



Best-selling author Robert Ludlum is PowerBooks Specialty Store's Author for April. Born in New York, raised in New Jersey and educated in Connecticut, Ludlum started writing only around his 40s. Before discovering his knack for writing, he served as a US Marine during World War II, had an acting stint an on Broadway and also worked as a theatrical producer. His colorful background may have been his inspiration for the spy thrillers he is best known for today.

He has written 21 novels, each one a New York Times bestseller. He has more than 210 million of his books in print, which have been translated into over 32 languages. Even after his death in March 2001, his unpublished manuscripts have been continued and published with the help of ghostwriters, a true testament to his unceasing popularity. His novels are complete with technical, biological and physical details that show the meticulous research he puts in for each novel.

Some of his acclaimed works include "The Scarlatti Inheritance," "The Matarese Circle" and "The Chancellor Manuscript." His other works have been made into films and mini-series, including "The Osterman Weekend," "The Holcroft Covenant," "Apocalypse Watch," "The Bourne Identity," and "The Bourne Supremacy."

Powerbooks has branches at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25) and Robinsons Place Ermita (523-3334/ 524-3448).

# 20 world DJs in one workshop

FOR THE THIRD ASIA-EUROPE MUSIC Camp called "I'mPULSE," the Asia-Europe Foundation (Asef) joins hands with the Dashanzi International Art Festival on May 14-21 to bring together 20 emerging DJs from 15 countries: Austria, Belgium, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

They will engage in a one-week series of dialogues and workshops through comprehensive digital music experimentation.

A close-up on the possibility of representation, translation and migration of Asian and European DJ culture will be presented by guest DJs from Asian Underground: Sam Zaman of State of Bengal and Ges-E of Nasha Records (UK), and China's Yang Bing.

Leon Lee, producer, Pentatonic Workshop (China), Aleksander Motturi, artistic director of Clandestino Festival (Sweden), and Asef's program manager for I'mPULSE, Vanini Belarmino, compose the team of curators for this Beijing project.

I'mPULSE is a program of the Asia-Europe Foundation's Cultural Exchange sector for the Asia-Europe Music Camp, designed to provide a platform for young people to exchange their ideas on music. Its aim is to encourage fresh minds to pursue the development of their music concepts by learning from each other. The Asef program label I'mPULSE was coined to stress the individuality and spontaneity that is apparent among young musicians.

E-mail vanini@asef.org.

# Fellows to national writing workshop named

THE UST CENTER FOR CREATIVE WRITING and Studies announces the names of the successful applicants to its 7th National Writers Workshop.

The successful applicants for English poetry are Alexie Renz M. Cruz (UST), Ainnie Frances F. dela Cruz (UP), Jennifer U. Macapagal (UP Manila), Margaux Dominique R. Dimanlig (UST) and Tim Nubla (UST).

The successful applicants for English fiction are Heizel L. Mainar (DLSU), Jonathan Siason (DLSU) and Chuck D. Smith (UST).

The successful applicants for Filipino are Roxanne Herce Belen (UP-Los Baños), Hazel E. Caasi (Ateneo), Niña Catherine P. Calleja (UPLB), Irene Lising (UST) and Sarah Jane B. Grutas (UP).

The 7th National Writers Workshop will be held May 2-6 at the UST Creative Writing Center. It will focus on poetry, fiction, one-act play, and creative nonfiction in English and Filipino. To conduct the workshop are Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Cirilo F. Bautista, Michael M. Coroza, Lourd de Veyra, Jose Victor Torres, Nerisa del Carmen Guevara, Eros Atalia and Carlos Luz.

# John Robert Powers releases personality development titles

IN THE RECENT MEETING OF FRANCHISES of John Robert Powers International in Bangkok, China Upton, JRP international vice president, presented a series of user-friendly authoritative books based on the JRP curriculum. They are called "Powers Red Book Series."

The books, according to Upton, "will serve as a natural extension of John Robert Powers' expertise to a wider audience and onto a global playing field. Through this series of books, the John Robert Powers brand can cement its authority, expand its influence and increase its renown."

The first volume is "Social Skills: A Modern Guide to Global Living," which has just been released.

The other franchise schools of JRP are found in Bangkok; Jakarta, Surabaya, Den Pasar (Bali), Kela Pagading and Medar (all in Indonesia), Tokyo, Fukuoka and Seoul, South Korea.

R. ZAMORA Linmark

## *Fulbright lecture on the novel at UST*

FILIPINO-AMERICAN WRITER R. Zamora Linmark will deliver his Fulbright lecture, "Pinoy Redux: Popular Culture, Memory, Identity (De)formation, and the Novel," on April 27, 1 p.m., at the audio-visual room of the Faculty of Arts and Letters, University of Santo Tomas.

The lecture is hosted by the Department of Languages and Department of Media Studies of the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters, and by the Varsitarian, the official UST student organ.

Reactors are Oscar Campomanes of the Ateneo de Manila University and Shirley Lua of De La Salle University.

A Fulbright scholar affiliated with UST, poet-fictionist Linmark is the author of the celebrated novel, "Rolling the R's," published by Kaya Press of New York. Last year, the Hanging Press of New York released his poetry volume, "Prime Time Apparitions." Linmark has also finished his second novel, "Leche."

Linmark received the 2000 US National Endowment for the Arts fellowship in poetry. His works are required readings in American university courses on Asian American letters.

The public is invited.

# Bart Guingona offers acting workshop

ACTOR'S ACTORS INC. (AAI), one of the country's most respected theater companies, opens its doors to aspiring and professional performers in its 2006 Summer Acting Workshop, which is open to teens and adults.

The workshops will be conducted by Aliw Award-winning theater actor, director and producer Bart Guingona, who most recently directed the hit musical "Once on This Island."

Guingona, who has completed grants in London for theater direction and theater education, will employ a wide range of methodologies, theoretical and practical applications to help bring out the individual's own gift of expressive confidence.

ACTOR'S Actors Inc.'s Bart Guingona

Guingona, who has directed some of the country's most acclaimed productions in recent memory, was a resident with Repertory Philippines for nine years before co-founding AAI with other Repertory veterans such as Jaime del Mundo, Michael Williams, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Dodo Lim, Roselyn Perez and Cita Astals, among others.

The three-week workshop will run May 2-20 and will have very limited slots available. Call 5365844 or 0917-5289746. E-mail actorsactorsinc@yahoo.com

# Cecile Licad survives cancer scare; holds recital of her life

From page D1

concert?

A PNR train was roaring in the middle of her rendition of Ravel's sonatine, but her interpretation of a Chopin scherzo left me in total awe of her art.

It didn't occur to me that she was barely 14 at the time. I didn't know what to expect from her because she was running around the hallway of St. Agnes before the concert, to the consternation of the nuns!

Five years later, she was a big name not just in Manila but also in New York, where her debut with the New York Philharmonic was a big success. (On that night, Irene Marcos-Araneta was escorted by Van Cliburn, and Licad's mom cried a river out of sheer happiness for her daughter's triumph.)

Marriage beckoned five years later. When Cecile's father, Dr. Jesus Licad, called to say that my favorite prodigy was getting married to a prize-winning Brazilian cellist, I thought I resented the development, and it showed in the long silence after the news was relayed to me.

I knew every aspect of that marriage. I saw the pianist as a dedicated wife and a doting mother.

She gave birth in New York in August the week Manila was in the middle of a coup d'etat.

In the year she was preparing for a Tchaikovsky concerto, we were transported to rehearsals at the Cultural Center of the Philippines like nannies, logging feeding bottles and strollers.

She was deep into a Brahms concerto when her son, Otavio, was bothered by an asthma attack.

I thought every time she agonized over her son's condition, the more deeply she played.

And on the year Otavio turned 10, Cecile realized her marriage was over. She confirmed the breakup on the eve of a recital in Bonn.

She was in deep emotional turmoil when she called her mom. "Should I cancel this concert, Mama? I may not be up to it in this condition."

"Don't cancel," the mother advised. "Just do your best."

After the recital, where the pianist got a standing ovation, Cecile called her mother.

"Mama, my concert went very well. I just realized I don't need a husband. I just need my music."

## Higher level

It was after that separation that everyone noticed she was playing in a much higher level and in a manner that dumbfounded even her Columbia Artist manager.

Two years ago, I received a guarded message from her mom that left me transfixed for what seemed like a lifetime. She said even Cecile didn't want this message relayed to me. It was the end of Christmas 2004.

I wondered what it was, but from the way Mrs. Licad sounded, I knew it was serious.

When the message was finally relayed to me, there was long silence on the phone. I kept it for days and couldn't keep it to myself any further.

I decided to consult with filmmaker Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Nonong Buencamino in the receiving room of the film school where they taught. When I broke the news, Abaya broke into tears.

When she recovered, Marilou said, "Well, Pablo, let's just pray. Just trust the Lord."

The bad news was that Cecile had signs of cancer, and an operation would reveal whether it was for real or a false alarm.

In New Year of 2005, I was drinking endless rounds of beer in the bistro of actor Joel Torre and looking despondent every day. The operation would take place in two weeks.

During those two critical weeks, Cecile had two concerts in Columbus, Ohio and Norfolk, Virginia—Ravel and Chopin concertos.

When Cecile found out I knew about her condition, we both sounded like characters on death row.

Remembering how Marilou Abaya reacted to the sad news, I heard myself muttering on the phone, "Let's just pray, Cecile."

A good two weeks after the operation, Cecile said the doctor needed more tests to make sure.

"Make sure what?" I yelled.

"That I don't have it."

When I heard it, I jumped for joy.

Meanwhile, the pre-operation concert of Cecile jolted even the critics, and I thought Cecile probably played as though that concert was her last.

A Norfolk music critic wrote of that concert: "The Saturday evening concert at Chrysler Hall was not just another 'on' night. For whatever reason, it was the orchestra's best performance in recent memory capped by the stunning performance of Cecile Licad. There was a lot more in Licad's extraordinary artistry revealed in Chopin's Concerto No. 2 With the orchestra's equally nuanced support, this was a concerto experience of the highest order."

A month after the operation, Cecile said the cancer symptom was a false alarm.

"Pablo, I will still be alive for God knows how many years. But I can still play till I am 90."

In thanksgiving during her concert here, Cecile Licad will go to Paoay Church on Sunday. I will see a person who went through the trials of her art and her life and remains an artist of the highest order.

"Pablo," she once said over the phone, "I have nothing but my art and my music. They are my real wealth."

Indeed, she has gone a long way from the teener I remember running around the school corridor of St. Agnes Academy in Legazpi City 31 years ago.

*For tickets to the April 27 recital of Cecile Licad, call 9007023 or 0910-8851136.*

**"I DON'T need a husband. I just need my music."**

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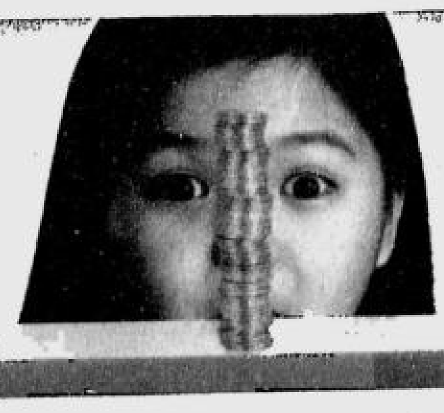
Promo runs from April 24 to June 30, 2006
See flyers and posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2407 Series of 2006



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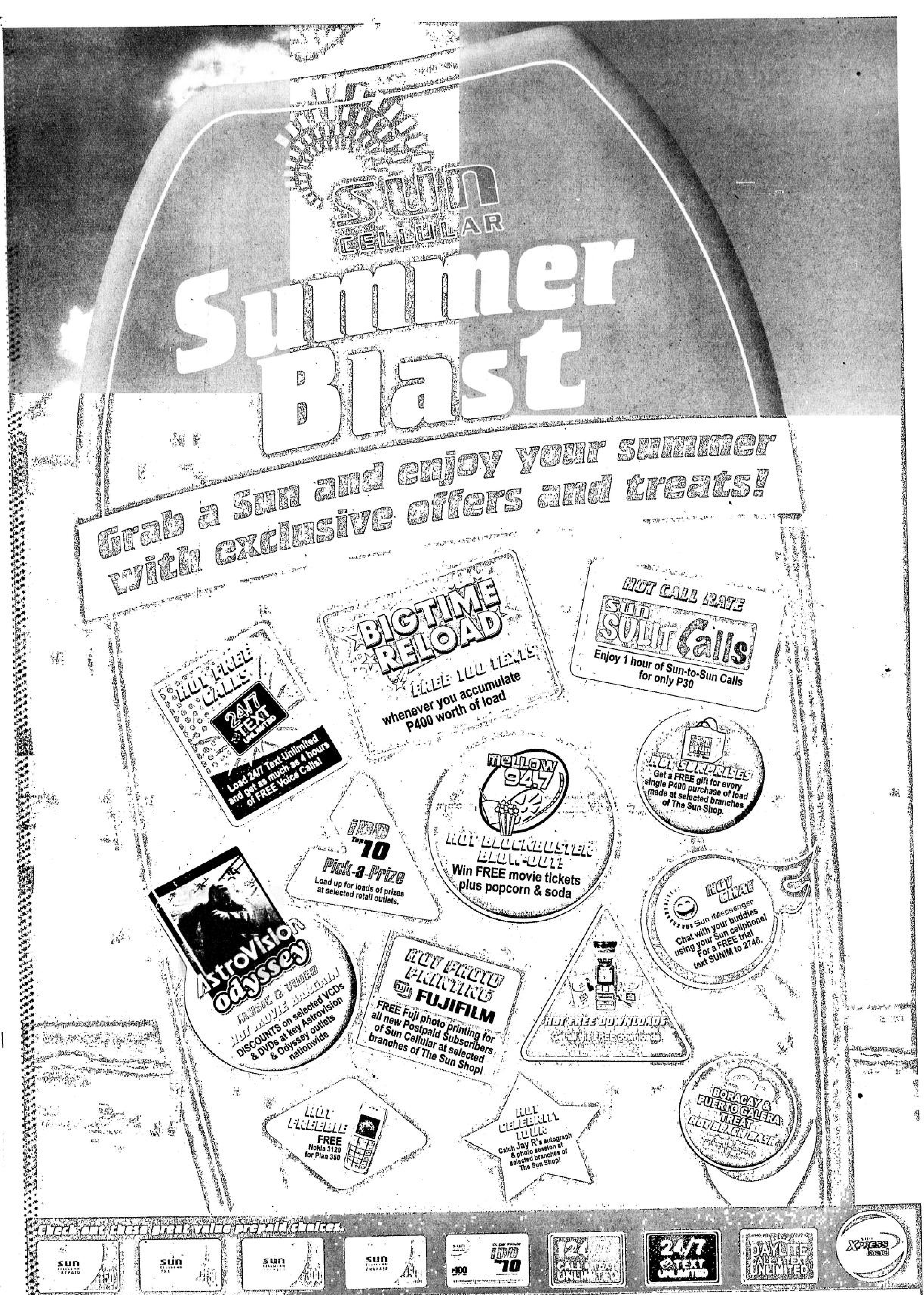
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  *Note: SMS message will be deleted by Astrovision & Odyssey sales personnel upon availment.*
- Discounts are given at the following key Astrovision and Odyssey outlets nationwide: Glorietta, Park Square, Greenbelt 1, Podium, Filinvest, Gateway Mall-Araneta, Market-Market, Rockwell, Eastwood City Walk, Robinsons Manila, SM Makati, SM Megamall, SM North EDSA, SM South Mall, Ayala Center Cebu
- Discount is from April 9 to July 2, 2006.
  *Note: Discounts do not apply to sale items.*

**FREE Photo Printing**

- Free photo printing shall be offered to all new Sun Cellular Postpaid subscribers. Only postpaid subscriptions approved within April 23 to 30, 2006 may qualify for the promo.
- Free photo printing can be availed only in participating branches of The Sun Shop within the promo period.
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- Free photo prints may be redeemed upon presentation of Official Receipt (dated April 23 to 30, 2006) to the Customer Service Representative in charge of the Fuji Film Photo Printing Booth in the following participating branches of The Sun Shop: Robinsons Galleria, SM Marilao, Robinsons Manila, SM Bacoor, Robinsons Metroeast, SM North Edsa, SM Fairview, SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM Centerpoint, Festival Mall, Shangrila and Park Square.
- Promo runs from April 23 to 30, 2006.

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- Participating branches as follows: Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Metroeast, Robinsons Manila, SM Manila, SM North Edsa and SM Fairview.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2327, Series of 2006.

**Get 100 FREE TEXT in Bigtime Reload Promo**

- To qualify in Bigtime Reload, simply accumulate P400 load within one (1) promo month and get 100 free texts. See Bigtime Reload posters for details. Promo months: April 1-30, May 1-31, 2006.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0953, Series of 2006.

**IDD TOP 10 PICK-A-PRIZE**

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- Prizes from the Pick-a-Prize box include ballpens, traveling bags, sports bottles and Sun Cellular P100 IDD TOP 10 Call Cards.
- Promo runs from April 1 to May 31, 2006.

See posters for details.
Per-DTI-NCR Permit no. 0612. Series of 2006.

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- Jay-R shall tour in selected branches of The Sun Shop in Metro Manila. Catch him at the following business centers:
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  May 14: Robinsons Manila and SM Manila
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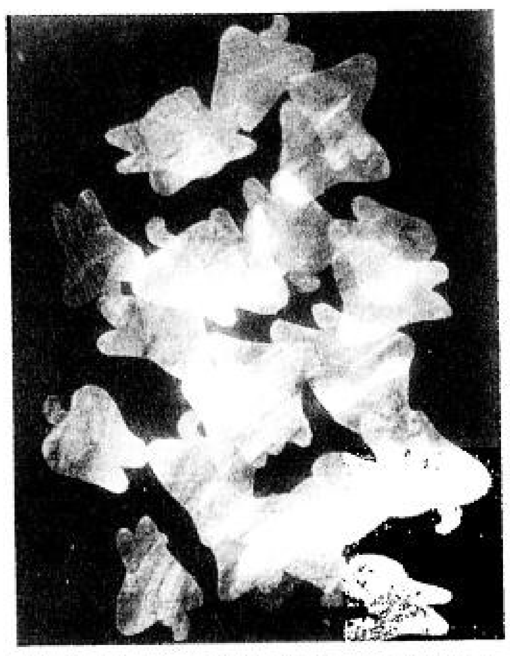
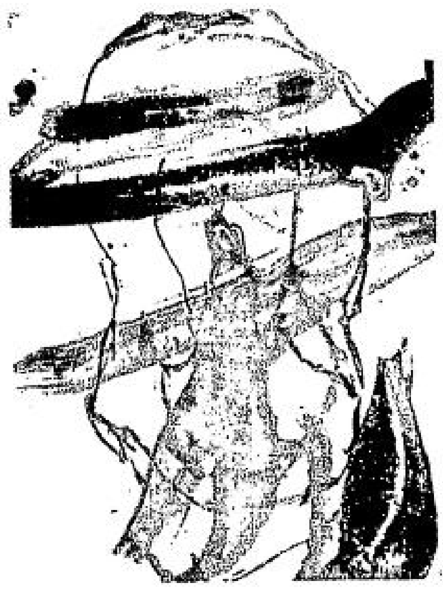


"STILL Life: Kasuy" 11580, by Romulo Olazo



"TRUE Love" Part 1, by Jonathan Olazo

# Mirror images

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE FATHER-AND-SON bond is exceptionally strong among families of artists, often it seems like hero worship.

We take as the few exceptions the cases of Malang Santos and sons Steve and Soler, Marcel and Angelito Antonio, Mikel and Mario Parial, as well as Cobie and Cris Cruz, because here the sons have obviously struggled to step out of their fathers' shadows.

In most cases, however, as with Michael and Tam Austria, Nune Alvarado and sons, José Blanco and sons, and even with sculptors José Mendoza and Jerry Araos and their sons, the art of the offspring appears like a natural extension of the father's.

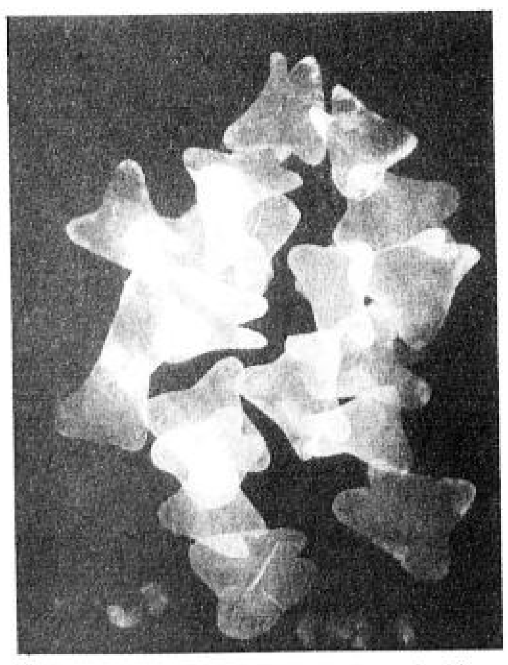
An interesting artistic evolution is similarly happening with Romulo Olazo and his son Jonathan.

The older Olazo is now secure in his place in the pantheon of second-generation Filipino modernists, having found a niche in both painting and printmaking and being easily recognizable for his "diaphanous" imagery. The younger one, a bold experimentalist in multimedia, is among the vanguard of contemporary Philippine art.

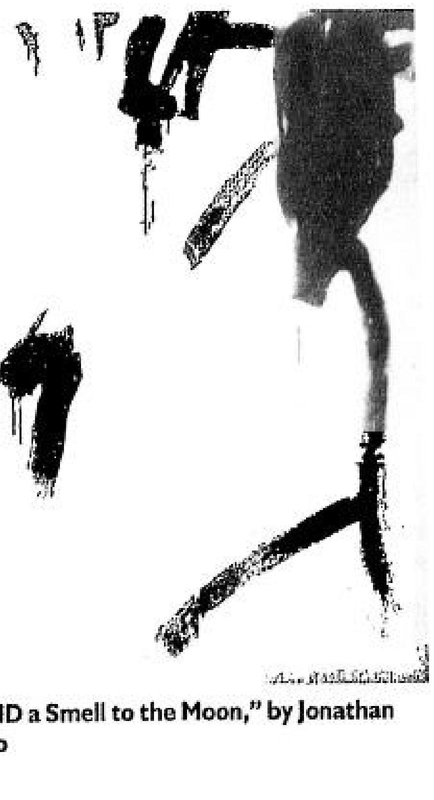
The two are holding their fourth joint exhibit, "Olazo & Olazo," 17 pieces in oil on canvas, 20 in mixed media on canvas and 13 on paper, and six installations, until May 3 in Galleria Duemila, 210 Loring St., San Rafael, Pasay City.

Here, the younger Olazo works in pure abstraction (color field, broad brushstrokes, graffiti), while the older's art is quasi-abstract (semitransparent, free-floating forms that

MIRROR/ E2



"STILL Life: Kasuy" (11579), by Romulo Olazo



"SEND a Smell to the Moon," by Jonathan Olazo

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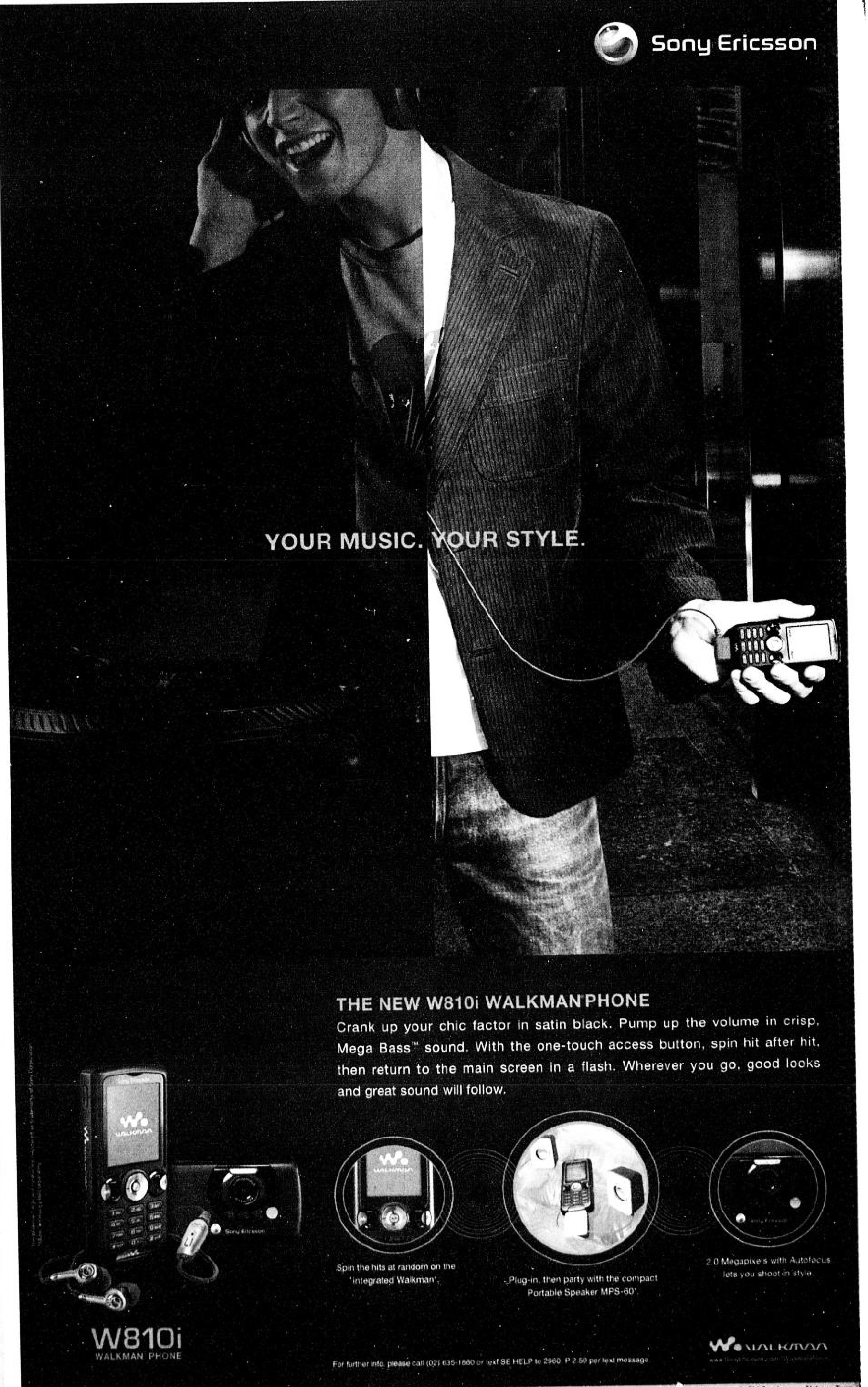

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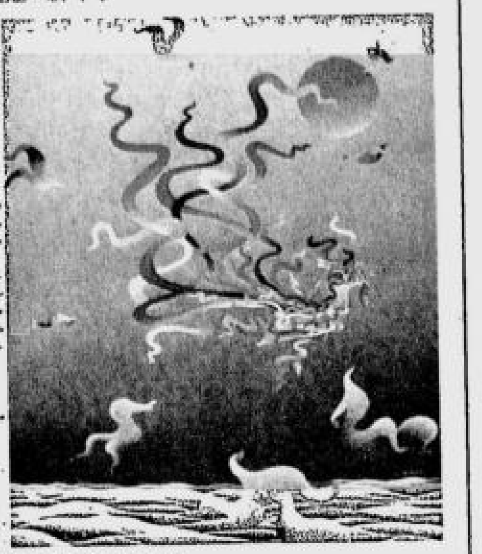
## VISUAL ARTS

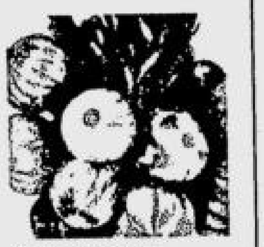


"SARIMANOK"

### Sillada at Art Center

Multimedia artist Danny Castillones Sillada's exhibit, "D.C. Sillada," is running until May 2 at the Art Center in SM Megamall. His controversial 2005 painting "Menstrual Period in Political History" is displayed along with his works from 1998 to 2006. Hailing from Mindanao, Sillada is a writer, performance artist and former seminarian. He received the Pasidungog Centennial Awards in the literary and visual arts. E-mail likha21@gmail.com or call Old Manila/Heritage Gallery at 6342710.

### Tiangco at 828



"SAGANA II"

Shiela Tiangco presents "Salamat," which depicts the beauty and richness of Nature. The exhibit opens on April 29 at 6 p.m. and runs until May 4 in Gallery 828, 4/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Edsa cor. Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City. Call 6375795 to 96.

### Faber-Castell workshops in Visayas

Faber-Castell will hold free art workshops for children 5-12 years old at SM City Cebu. The coloring workshop is on April 28-29. The pencil-making, video-showing and basic art lessons are on April 30-May 1. No pre-registration is required. Faber-Castell will provide all the art materials. Slots will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 3617391 to 92.

### Pardo de Leon at Finale

UNTITLED

On view until May 9 in Finale Art Gallery (4/F, SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City) is Pardo de Leon's "Recent Works." Navigating the space between the figurative and the abstract, the exhibit dutifully presents the artist's commitment to color and devotion to detail as ways with which to infuse both her still lifes and abstract creations with a luminous, reverberating and spiritually tough quality. Call 6342411.

### Austria lectures at Bulacan university

Artist-author Tam P. Austria autographs a copy of his book on aesthetics after delivering a lecture at the Bulacan State University's College of Architecture and Fine Arts. Bulacan artists and educators such as Rey Salamat, Sylvia Joaquin, Danny Pangan, Cesar Cruz and Al Perez welcomed Austria.

### Spectrum artists at Glorietta

Spectrum Group artists Rod Banzon, Tessie Picana, Chie and Chigo Cruz are holding a show of their recent works at the Art Center (3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati). Banson paints his figures who are engaged in work or indulging in pastime, done in the naif style and with bold strokes and primary colors. Picana paints flowers, mostly of the tropical variety, blending touches of realism and expressionism. Chie Cruz works in resin on canvas, merging sculptural rendering of the human hands with thick impasto on her canvases. Her sister Chigo works in the minimalist style, mixing white on white, and with spare elegant touches. The Cruz sisters are children of artist Lydia Velasco. The exhibit runs until May 1.

"ONE-EYED Grandma," by Rod Banzon

"SHADOW Play"

### Concepcion at Hues

Ige Concepcion holds a one-man exhibit in Gallerie Hues at MC Home Depot, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

# Boracay's allure captured in

**By Gino Dormiendo**
*Contributor*

WE ARRIVED IN BORACAY VIA SEAAIR A week ahead of holiday revelers. Having finally descended to Patio Pacific, our host hotel, we realized that the days leading to Holy Week were, indeed, the best time to revel in the spirit of fun and freedom that pervaded the island resort.

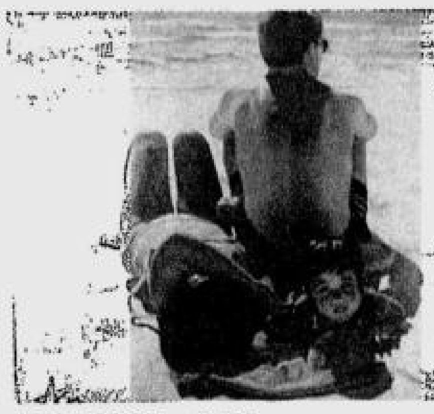
Formerly known as Pink Patio, the Patio Pacific has been renovated. It just opened its Alpha Wellness Center, showcasing its brand-new Alpha Capsule dry-heat sauna, and the art exhibit beside it by the poolside, featuring no less than a genuine, homegrown talent, Antonio Gelito San José Jr., and his recent oeuvre on view.

Model and television personality Mark Nelson and his fiancée, together with last year's Ms Earth, Priscilla Meirelles, painter Rellie Liwag, and this writer had been invited to cut the ribbon for the formal opening.

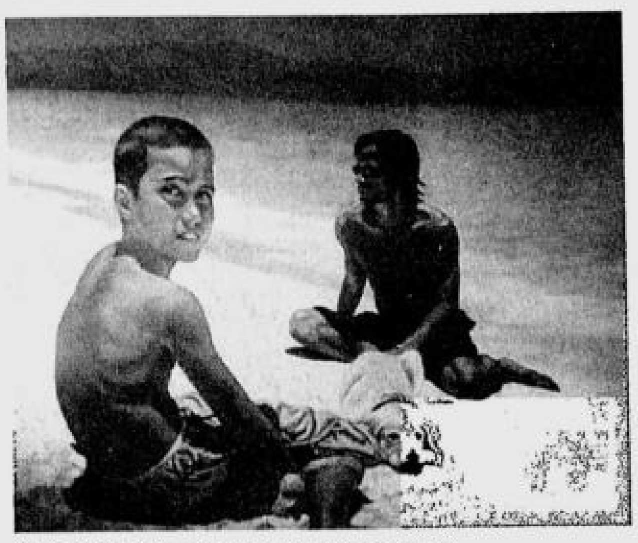
The Patio's owners, Charlie Uy and Raquel "Kelly" Boncan, were among the first to have foreshadowed Boracay's bright future, with their decision to open a hotel in upscale Station 1. Two decades later, their modest investment has, as with the entire island resort, grown immensely.

They happen to have lured back an excellent chef who had gone to Germany and worked in its most exclusive hotel. Being art lovers both, the owners have likewise cast their lot, and their faith, with local talents like San José, formerly a fashion designer and stylist who had lived in Berlin for six years, finished a course in fashion design, and worked as artist and illustrator in Paris, at the House of Daniel Hechter.

RIBBON-CUTTING at Patio Pacific



"BORACAY Family" 2



"BORACAY Family," by Antonio San José

The artist had to come home for good, upon his mother's admonition, first to work as visual merchandising manager in various apparel companies, and later as illustrator and designer-stylist for glossy women's magazines.

Since 1998, he has spent time painting the island's manifold bounty, its sun-dappled beaches and sun-worshipping revelers.

His first major exhibition, under the auspices of Patio Pacific, consists of paintings of bathing beauties who had gamely posed for the artist.

### Pop art

With the lush foliage as backdrop, his ubiquitous bather, clad i
candid, effervescent
Pop Art elements wi
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San José, to his c
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the island.

The subject he h
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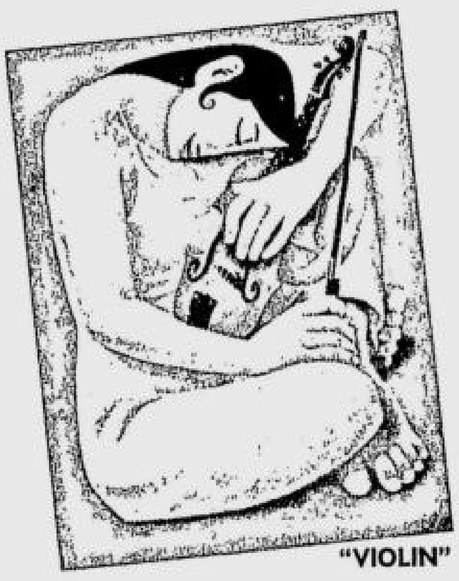
*E-mail author at g*



"VIOLIN"

# *Vista off to Singapore*

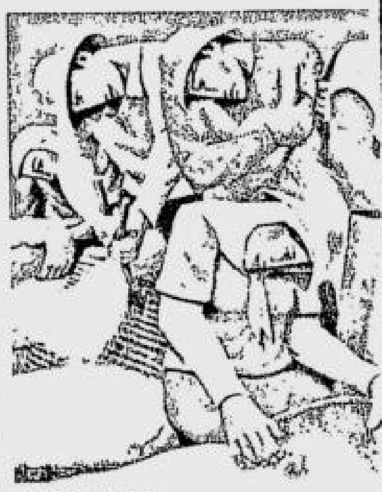
BERNARD VISTA GOES INTERNATIONAL AS he flies to Singapore this April to be the artist-in-residence at the Artesan Gallery. He is set to paint several works while he stays at Artesan for three weeks in preparation for his major solo exhibition scheduled in Singapore in June.

Based on the artist's perspective, Vista will attempt to interpret Singaporean culture as well as the Singaporean way of life on his canvas and infuse it with Filipino art through his cubist renditions. He will also facilitate an art workshop for beginners and advanced students.

One of Pakil, Laguna's, top figurative artists, Vista gained recognition for his larger-than-life depictions of the Filipino way of life, highlighting the rich customs and traditions of Filipinos and the humanity of rural folk.

In Manila, Vista is represented by Galerie Joaquin. He will join the thematic group exhibition on music titled "La Musique IV," which will open at Galerie Joaquin in San Juan on May 16.

Vista was a scholar of the Saturday Group of Artists under National Artist Cesar Legaspi. He took up Fine Arts at University of Santo Tomas. He is a founding member of the Guevarra Group of Artists.



"HARVEST"

SATURDAY Group of Artists after using Clorox Bleach Pen in a demo

MALANG tries the art instrument.

# Saturday Group tries new art medium

WITH DENIM AS CANVAS, THE SATURDAY Group of Artists, led by chair emeritus Mauro Malang Santos and president Buds Convocar, dabbled in a new art tool, Clorox Bleach Pen, more commonly used as a fabric and household cleaner.

"It's a nontraditional medium. None of us here has done anything like this," says Convocar. Instead of using conventional canvas, the artists worked on stretched-out denim and explored various themes.

Participants were Nick Masangkay, Ben Infante, Anna de Leon, Vic Bachoco, Rudy Lunod, Cris Cruz, Jose Dinglasan, Danny Pangan, Bing Siochi, Boy Valino, Frank Cana, Ernie Patricio, Keith Paras, Noel Obemio, Andy Urag, Jericho Blanco, Roland Santos, Carlo Ongchiangco, Ding Hidalgo and Marcelo Baldomar.

The new art tool is dual-tipped for control and convenience. The fine point is for precise paint strokes or for tiny fabric stains between stripes, while the scrubber is for broader applications.

The pen works like magic. Users watch stains disappear (and images appear on denim) on the spot. Students in schools and dormitories can use it for easy maintenance of clothes, and to stylize denim outfits, create statements on T-shirts, design their footwear with flair, and personalize bags and pillows.

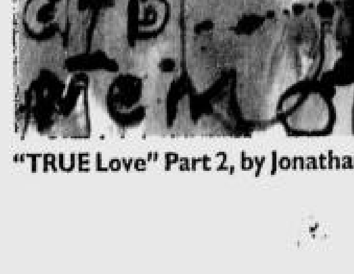
It can be easily tucked in a pocket or in the bag for quick, mess-free cleanups, and on-the-spot art projects.

Convocar points out how the process of bleach art is similar to printmaking, and "yet is fresh and very distinct," hinting that "it might develop into an original form of art."

MARCELO Baldomar explores the use of the new pen.

# Mirror images

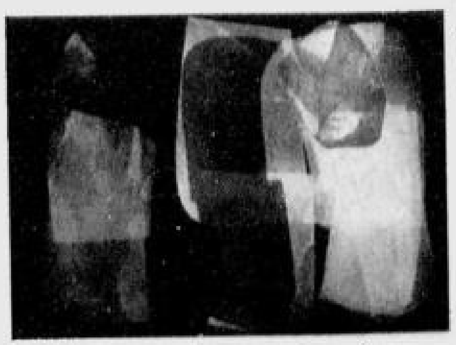
From page E1



"TRUE Love" Part 2, by Jonathan Olazo

could be fruits, leaves, flowers, butterflies). In their merging of dissimilar aesthetics, father and son achieve a particular bonding.

At first glance, the father's fineness of technique, the purity of line and translucence of form, appears in direct contrast to the son's roughshod brushwork. At a distance, however, the respective pieces look like film negatives or distorted-mirror images of one another.



"DIAPHANOUS" 574, by Romulo Olazo

In fact, many of the son's pieces seem to be a reworking of his father's paintings, the way Picasso reworked Velázquez. Witness, for example, his "True Love" Part 2 and see if it's not a reworking of his father's "Diaphanous" 574.

Also, the yellow shapes on green background of his father's "Still Life: Kasuy" (11580) is inversely reflected in the yellow field with green calligraphic strokes of his "True Love" Part 1. The white on blue of "Still Life: Kasuy" (11579) is echoed in the white wash with blue strokes of his "Send a Smell to the Moon."

Despite the titles of his pieces such as "Holy Smoke!" and "Tattoo Love," when they're put side by side with his father's, the viewer instinctively becomes a formalist. You don't think whether the young Olazo is pining for someone or parodying something. You just want to see whether his rough brushstroke has as much impact and appeal as his father's precise line.

You investigate whether he uses the same intensity of acid-green as his father's, or if the blueness of his piece is of the same degree as his father's. (Sorry, son, but that's the way it is.)

Mentored by Victorio Edades and Diosdado Lorenzo in University of Santo Tomas, Romulo Olazo has emerged as a rigid formalist. Mentored by such a one as Roberto Chabet in University of the Philippines, Jonathan naturally produces art that's strong on the conceptual.

Romulo, now 73, received the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 1972, when he was 38. Jonathan, 37, got it in 1994 when he was only 25, the youngest to have done so.

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# art

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edit, keeps his illustrator which serves him well in re the obvious charms of

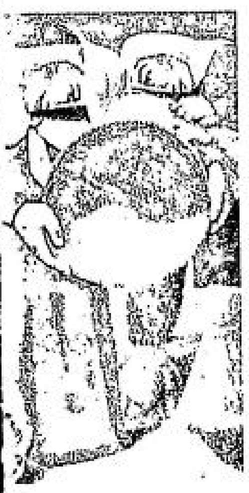
s chosen, a woman who ical, exotic beauty, recurs ing her killer smile, and, vell-toned physiognomy. an inexhaustible trove, principal subject, amply rsatility and mastery of

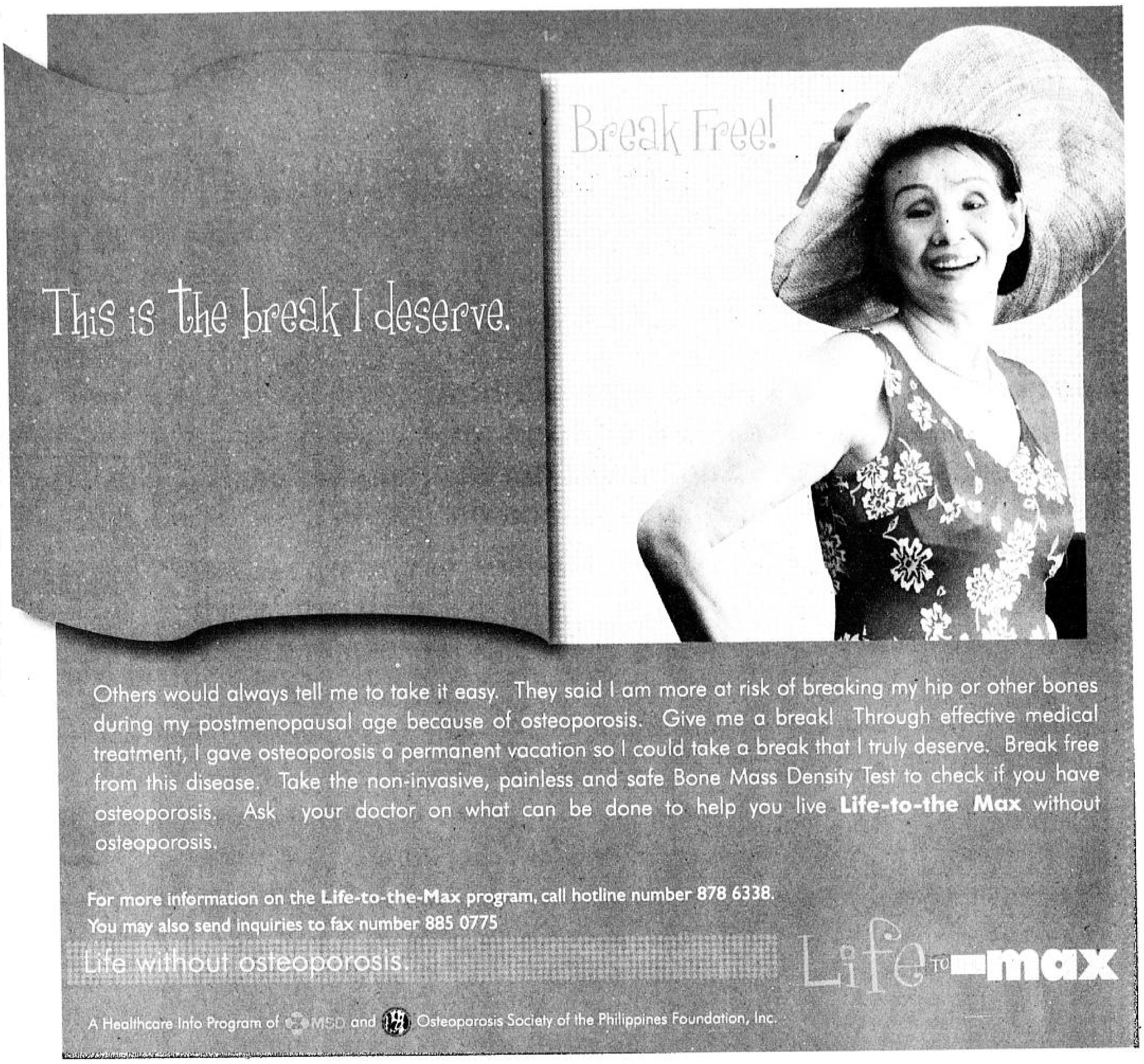
sive are the artist's other t to be exhibited. These showed us in his own show two generations of rents and their offspring, n or Eurasian stock.

lso rendered in the most just like the romantic li- n been forged between their local hosts.

lose such an astute por- ity to capture the charac- with melodramatic ges- with his rare gift for cap- ous of the subjects' fea- l glance darting straight or by minimal body lan- n the sand.

*lormiendo@yahoo.com*

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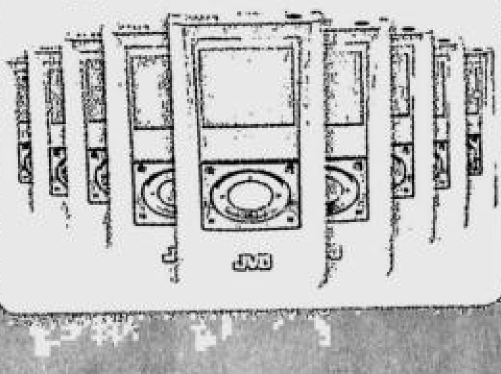

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It's 3 days-plus-one of cool buys on April 28,29,30 and May 1. City of Pines locals and summer visitors will surely enjoy the value offers in store for them mallwide at SM City Baguio.

### SM City Davao

In addition to big savings and great food treats, you can

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